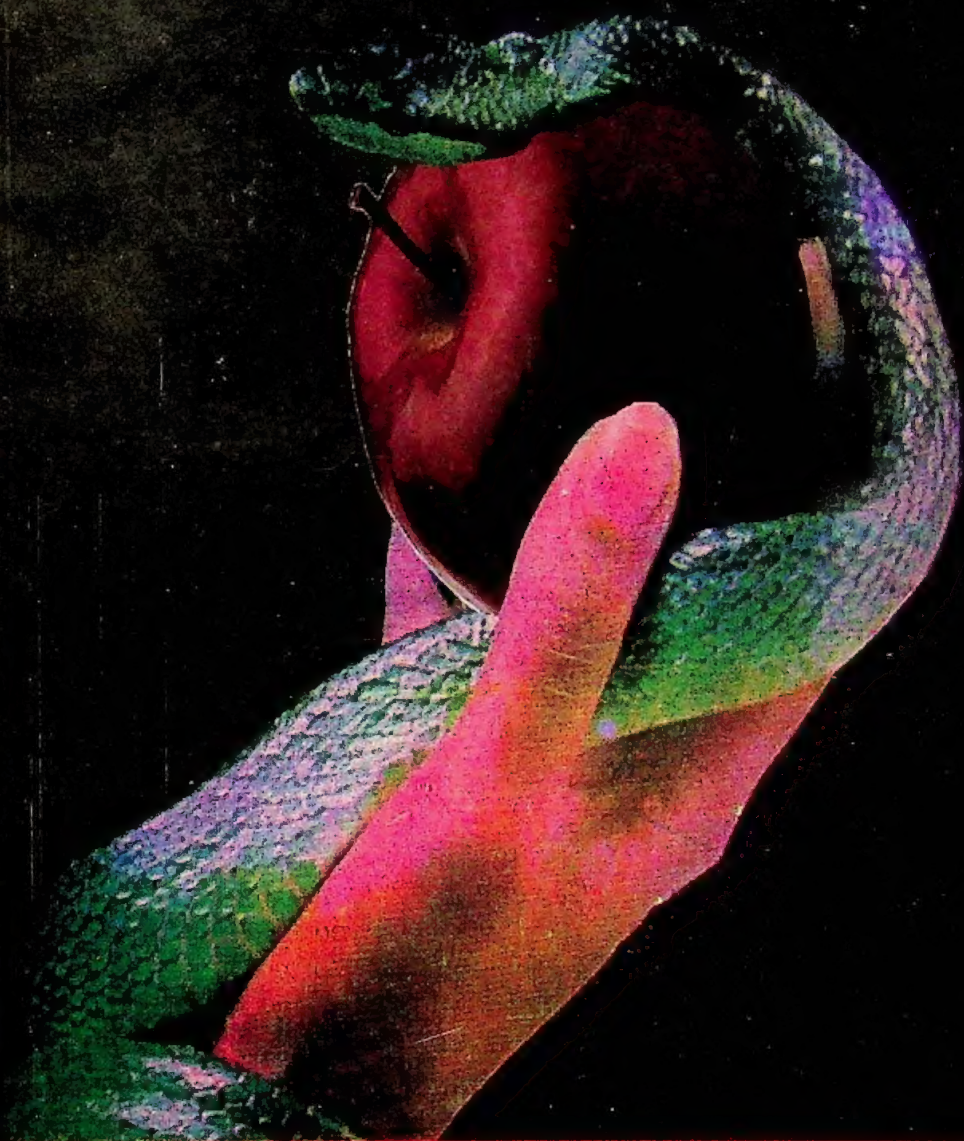


Umesh Patri



PROBLEMS IN PARADISE

What they say...

Through the readings of popular scientific books I soon reached the conviction that much of the stories in the Bible could not be true.

— **Einstein**

The Life and Times of Einstein

Ed. Ronald Clerk, New York :

World Publishing Co. 1971:17

The Bible contains a great number of obscene, vulgar, lewd, filthy stories and references. To say the least, much of it would not be discussed by cultured and refined people in the way it is set forth in the so-called holy book. Exaggerated sex references are numerous. As a history and a fair portrayal of the life of the ancient rabbinical life of the Jews, these things can be considered as a sort of history, but as a holy book, the inspired work of an all powerful, all-loving, all-kind god, the Bible sets a poor example.

— **James Hervey Johnson**

Freethought by Three Men

San Diego : Truth Seeker, 1991:121

It has often been said, that anything may be proved from the Bible but before anything can be admitted as proved by the Bible, the Bible itself must be proved to be true; for if the Bible be not true, or the truth of it be doubtful, it ceases to have authority, and cannot be admitted as proof of anything.

— **Thomas Paine**

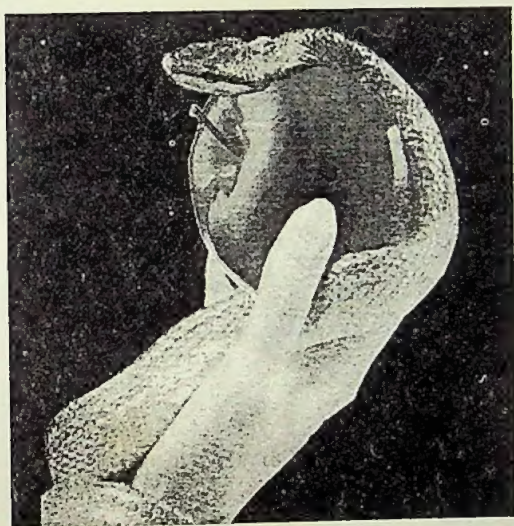
The Age of Reason

New York : Gramercy Books, 1993:75

PROBLEMS IN PARADISE

666

QUESTIONS CONCERNING CHRISTIAN FAITH



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PROBLEMS IN PARADISE

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© Dr Prativa Devi, MA, MEd, PGDTE, PhD.

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considered by the Author.*

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With loving greetings to beloved
Sri. Bhakti Vikas Swami Maharaj

Unesh Fabri^o
30/03/03

READER, if you find
SOMETHING THAT OFFENDS YOU
in this MOST MODEST little book,
DON'T BE SURPRISED. BECAUSE DIVINE,
NOT HUMAN,
is THAT WHICH HATH NO blemish.

(From the title pages of several
early 17th C. Tuscan books.)

Biblical Abbreviations

The Old Testament

Gn	- Genesis
Ex	- Exodus
Lv	- Leviticus
Nu	- Numbers
Dt	- Deuteronomy
Jos	- Joshua
Jdg	- Judges
Ru	- Ruth
1 Sa	- 1 Samuel
2 Sa	- 2 Samuel
1 Ki	- 1 Kings
2 Ki	- 2 Kings
1 Ch	- 1 Chronicles
2 Ch	- 2 Chronicles
Ezr	- Ezra
Ne	- Nehemiah
Est	- Esther
Jb	- Job
Ps	- Psalms
Pr	- Proverbs
Ec	- Ecclesiastes
SS	- Song of Songs
Is	- Isaiah
Je	- Jeremiah
La	- Lamentations
Ezk	- Ezekiel
Dn	- Daniel
Ho	- Hosea
Joel	- Joel
Am	- Amos
Ob	- Obadiah
Jon	- Jonah
Mi	- Micah
Na	- Nahum
Hab	- Habakkuk

Zp	- Zephaniah
Hg	- Haggai
Zc	- Zechariah
Mal	- Malachi

The New Testament

Mt	- Matthew
Mk	- Mark
Lk	- Luke
Jn	- John
Acts	- Acts
Rom	- Romans
1 Cor	- 1 Corinthians
2 Cor	- 2 Corinthians
Gal	- Galatians
Epn	- Ephesians
Phil	- Philippians
Col	- Colossians
1 Thes	- 1 Thessalonians
2 Thes	- 2 Thessalonians
1 Tim	- 1 Timothy
2 Tim	- 2 Timothy
Tit	- Titus
Phm	- Philemon
Heb	- Hebrews
Jas	- James
1 Pet	- 1 Peter
2 Pet	- 2 Peter
1 Jn	- 1 John
2 Jn	- 2 John
3 Jn	- 3 John
Jude	- Jude
Rev	- The Revelation

BRAHM DATT BHARTI
My
Perennial Source of Inspiration

Umesh

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KNOW YOUR BIBLE

The word "**BIBLE**" comes from the Greek "**BIBLIA**" meaning The Book.

It is a collection of ancient writings about God Yahweh.

The **Protestant Bible** includes **66 writings** of the Palestinian canon.

The **Catholic Bible** includes **73 books** of the Alexandrian canon.

"**TESTAMENT**" means "**AGREEMENT**", agreement between God and men.

39 Old Testament books were written in Hebrew **27 New Testament books** were written in Greek.

7 Old Testament books were written in **GREEK AND ARAMAIC**.

The Old Testament tells the history of God's interventions in the lives of the Jews – "**CHOSEN PEOPLE**" and The New Testament is about the birth, life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as well as the life and growth of the early church He founded.

WHO WROTE THE BIBLE ?

It has been written by kings, soldiers, shepherds, farmers and fishermen.

WHEN WAS THE BIBLE WRITTEN ?

AT DIFFERENT TIMES : from about 900 B.C. to 150 A.D.

AT DIFFERENT PLACES : Palestine, Babylon, Egypt, Rome and Corinth. It was begun by Moses in the lonely desert of Arabia and finished by John on the Isle of Patmos. Some of it was written in kings' palaces, some in shepherds' tents, some besides still waters and part of it was written in prison.

FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES : to teach religion and Patriotism, to describe the Messiah.

IN WHAT LANGUAGE THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN ?

In Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek

- | | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| HEBREW | - | is a Semitic language like Arabic and is written from right to left. It was the language of the Jews after their return from exile at the end of the 6th century B.C. |
| ARAMAIC | - | was the Semitic language of Armenia and Persia used by the Jews after their return from exile. It is the language that Jesus spoke. |
| GREEK | - | is an Aryan or Indo-European language like Sanskrit and Latin. It became the international language of western Asia after Alexander's conquest. |

WHO ARE

(a) THE JEWS ?

Originally meant 'man or men of Judah', the 4th son of Jacob, a name applied to the Hebrews particularly after the return from Babylon. It was commonly used in the Old Testament by the non-Jews to refer to the Hebrews or descendants of Abraham in general. In New Testament the plural 'Jews' had become a familiar term for all Israelites.

(b) THE PHARISEES ?

A group of Jews of Palestine, who separated themselves from the ordinary Jews in order to excel others in the observances of religion, especially in the exact observances of the laws. Pharisee means "the separated ones" – separated from the rest of Jews because they allowed themselves to be influenced by Hellenism or the Greco-Roman culture.

(c) THE SADDUCEES ?

A group of upper class, rich and noble Jews who tried to be modern and up-to-date by encouraging the customs of Greeks. They claim to be descended from the priestly family of Zadok.

(d) THE SCRIBES ?

The scribes are the scholars and intellectual men of Judaism who are experts in the Law or the Torah.

(e) THE SAMARITANS ?

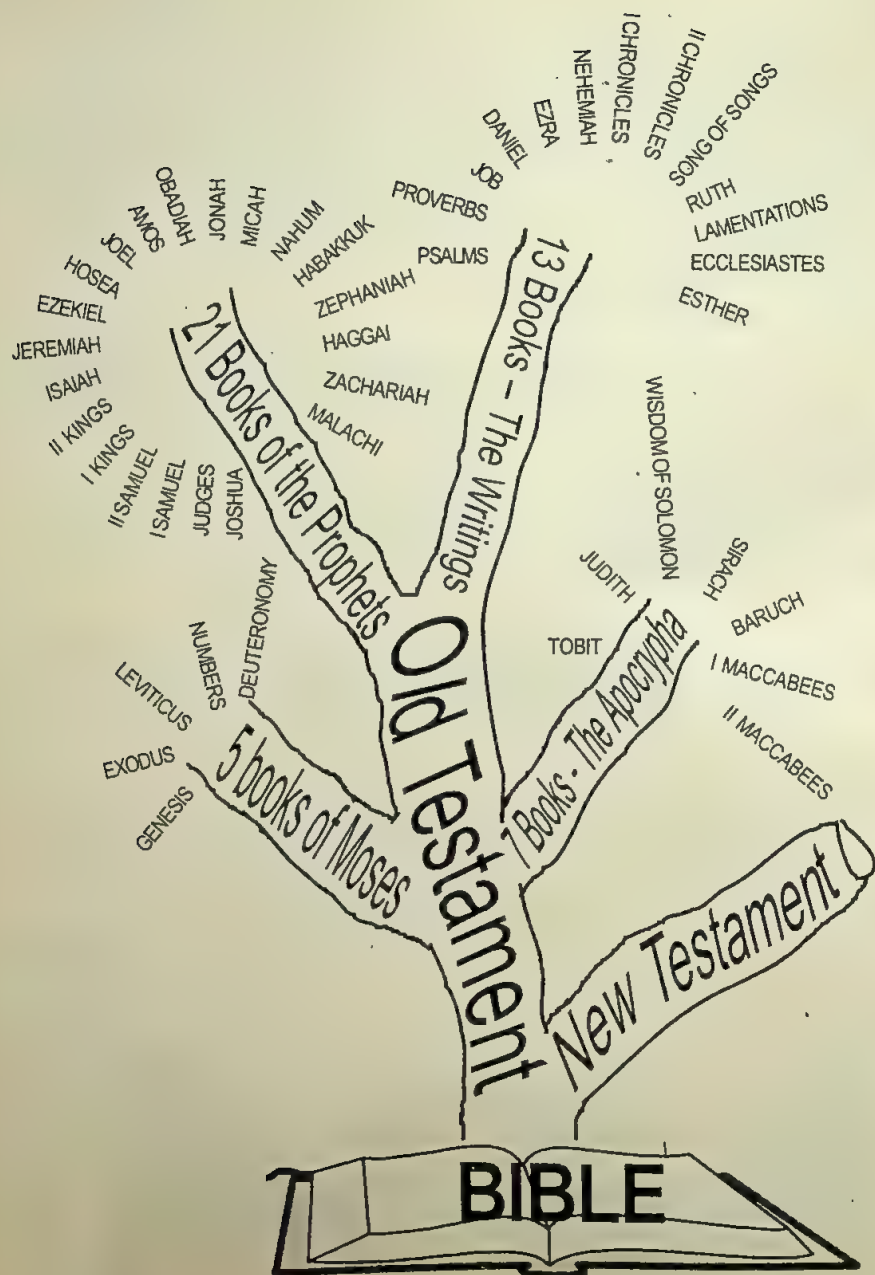
The Samaritans are the inhabitants of the district of Samaria. They were considered lower than the pagans.

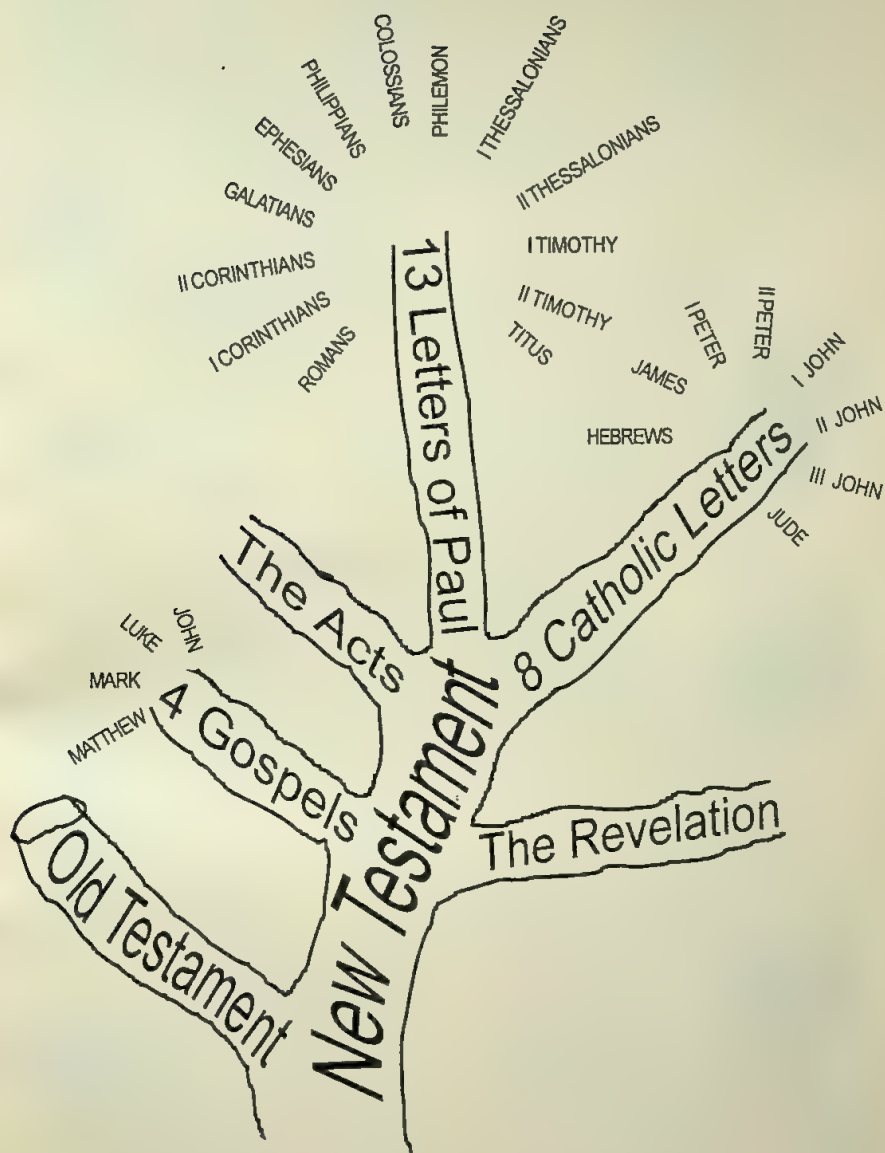
OLD TESTAMENT

46 Books in Catholic Bible

39 Books in Protestant Bible

- Group A – 5 Books in Torah**
- Group B – 21 Books of the Prophets**
- Group C – 13 Books - The Writings**
- Group D – 7 Books - The Apocrypha**





GROUP - A

The first 5 books of Moses called "PENTATEUCH" or the Law or TORAH.

Written at about 1450-1410 BC by Moses for the people of Israel.



Records God's creation of this world and human race; origin of the Hebrews as the "Chosen People" of God who were set apart to worship him.

50 CHAPTERS

Characters : Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Issac, Rebekah, Jacob, Joseph.



The deliverance of Israelites from Egypt and their promise to Yahweh at Mt. Sinai to observe the covenants they made with Him.

40 CHAPTERS

Characters : Moses, Miriam, Pharaoh, Pharaoh's daughter, Jethro, Aaron, Joshua, Bezalel.

☐ Contains the Ten Commandments and more miracles than any other Old Testament book.



Handbook for the priests and Levites giving more laws, regulations for sacrifices and rules for observing Holydays.

27 CHAPTERS

Characters : Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, Ithamar.

☐ Holiness is mentioned 152 times more than any other book of the Bible.



Census of the people, story of Israelites entering the Promised Land, how they sinned and were punished.

36 CHAPTERS

Characters : Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Joshua, Caleb, Eleazar, Korah, Balaam.



Moses' last discourses to remind God's benevolence and encourage people to rededicate their lives to God.

34 CHAPTERS

Characters : Moses, Joshua.

□ Written by Moses except the last part which is written by Joshua after the death of Moses.

GROUP – B

21 BOOKS OF THE PROPHETS

6 "FORMER PROPHETS"

Story of Israel's conquest of Canaan.

24 CHAPTERS



Joshua and Caleb were the only persons who, out of a million people, crossed Egypt to enter the Promised Land.

Author : Joshua except the last part which is written by Phinehas, a high-priest.
Characters : Joshua, Rahab, Achan, Phinehas, Eleazar.



Troubles in the Promised Land where its fortune depended on obedience to God's Law who punishes sinners but forgives those who repent.

20 CHAPTERS

Author : Possibly Samuel.
Characters : Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Abimelech, Jephthah, Samson, Delilah.

□ Records Israel's first civil war; rule of the tribal chiefs.



Life of Samuel, Israel's last judge; and reign and decline of Saul, Israel's first king.

31 CHAPTERS

Author : Samuel.
Characters : Eli, Hannah, Samuel, Saul, Jonathan, David.



Life and reign of David as an ideal leader who rules an imperfect land with the effective leadership under God.

24 CHAPTERS

Author : Unknown.
Date : 930 B.C.



Death of David, his son Solomon's reign and history of the kings of Israel upto Ahab's son Ahaziah.

22 CHAPTERS

Author : Unknown.
Characters : David, Solomon, Rehoboam, Jeroboam, Elijah, Ahab, Jezebel.



The once-united nation of Israel divided into two kingdoms—Israel and Judah for a century and the events leading their captivity.

25 CHAPTERS

Author : Unknown.
Characters : Elijah, Elisha, Shunammite woman, Naaman, Jezebel, Jehu, Joash, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Sennacherib, Mannaseh, Josiah, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar.

□ The two books I & II kings were originally one.

3 "MAJOR PROPHETS"



Son of Amoz, Prophet Isaiah's ministry and messianic oracles.

66 CHAPTERS

□ The book contains prose and poetry and uses personification.

Author : Isaiah.
Date : First part written in about 700 B.C and the second part in 681 B.C.
Characters : Isaiah, his two sons, Shear-Jashub and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.



Prophet Jeremiah's prophecies to a nation in crisis which was eventually conquered by Babylon in 586 B.C. He ministered under

52 CHAPTERS

Author : Jeremiah.
 Date : 627-586 B.C.
 Characters: Judah's last five kings, Baruch, Ebed-Melech, King Nebuchadnezzar, the Recabites.

Judah's last five kings – Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah.

□ The book is a combination of history, poetry and biography and uses symbolism.



Ezekiel's prophecy for Israel's salvation in a new covenant. He ministered those already exiled in Babylonia.

48 CHAPTERS

Author : Ezekiel.
 Date : 571 B.C.
 Characters : Ezekiel, Israel's leaders, Ezekiel's wife, Nebuchadnezzar, "the prince".

12 "MINOR PROPHETS"



First of 12 minor prophets, son of Beeri, Hosea began preaching towards the end of the morally declining reign of

14 CHAPTERS

Author : Hosea.
 Date : 715 B.C.
 Characters: Hosea, Gomer, their children.

Jeroboam II of Israel. Reproaches sin but says God loves and forgives those who repent.

□ Employs many images for God from daily life – God as husband, father, bear, leopard, lion, dew, rain, moth etc., and Israel as wife, sick, vine, grapes, olive tree, woman in childbirth, oven morning mist, chaff, smoke etc.



Warning of Joel, son of Pethuel to people of Judah against leading a morally-corrupt and sinful life and urging them to turn back to God.

3 CHAPTERS

Author : Joel.
Date : 796 B.C.
Characters : Joel, Judah's citizens.



Amos pronounces the destruction of Israel for its sins.

9 CHAPTERS

□ Earliest recorded sermons; uses striking metaphors like – a

loaded cart, a roaring lion, mutilated sheep, pampered cow, basketful of fruit etc.

Author : Amos.
Date : 760-750 B.C.
Characters : Amos, Amaziah, Jeroboam II.



Edom had constantly harassed Jews and Obadiah denounces Edom for joining Judah's enemy.

1 CHAPTERS

Author : Obadiah.
Date : 853-841 B.C.
Characters : The Edomites.

□ The book uses vigorous poetic language.



This book is a parable of mercy showing the extent of God's love. It tells the story of the

4 CHAPTERS

prophet and not only his prophecies, thus it is different from other prophetic books.

□ A historical narrative referred by Jesus as well as a picture of his death and resurrection.

Author : Jonah.
Date : 785-760 B.C.
Characters : Jonah, the ship's captain and crew.





Micah's pronouncement of God's judgement on Judah for its sins and pardon to all who repent.


7 CHAPTERS


Author : Micah.
Date : 742-687 B.C.
Characters : People of Samaria & Jerusalem.


*The book is a beautiful example of classical Hebrew poetry. There are three parts – each beginning with "Hear" or "Listen" and closing with a promise.

	Prophesy comforting Judah for the fall of Nineveh (Assyria).	3 CHAPTERS
	Author	: Nahum
	Date	: 663-612 B.C.
	Characters:	People of Ninevah and Judah.

	Babylon's growing power and Habakkuk's pronouncement that Judah will be captured by Babylon.	3 CHAPTERS
	Author	: Habakkuk.
	Date	: 612-588 B.C.
	Characters	: Habakkuk, the Babylonians.

	Zephaniah's sermons to people of Judah to reform their evil ways and turn back to God.	3 CHAPTERS
	Author	: Zephaniah.
	Date	: 640-621 B.C.

	Haggai preached the Jews returning to Jerusalem after exile in Babylon to rebuild the temple of Yahweh. He is the first of the post-exilic prophets.	2 CHAPTERS
	Author	: Haggai.
	Date	: 520 B.C.
	Characters:	Haggai, Zerubbabel, Joshua.

	Alongwith Haggai, Zechariah encourages the people to continue and complete the	14 CHAPTERS
	Author	: Zechariah.
	Date	: First part in 520-518 B.C and second part in 480 B.C.
	Characters:	Zerubbabel, Joshua.

work of rebuilding the temple and comforts them by revealing the coming of a Messiah.

□Most apocalyptic and Messianic of all the books among minor prophets



Malachi confronts the people for their neglect of the temple and urges them to return to their own God.

4 CHAPTERS

Author : Malachi
Date : 430 B.C.
Characters : Malachi, the priests.

Group – C

13 Books – The Writings



150 songs of praise, worship, confession to God; also a historical narrative describing events in history.

Author : 73 psalms ascribed to David, 12 to Asaph, 9 to the sons of Korah, 2 to Solomon, 1 each to Heman, Ethan and Moses, 51 are anonymous.

Date : Between the time of Moses 1440 B.C. and the Babylonian captivity 586 B.C.

Characters : David.



A collection of wise sayings, religious and worldly, by Solomon and others.

31 CHAPTERS

Author : Mostly Solomon along with Agur and Lemuel contributing some.

Date : During Solomon's reign.

1

The book uses varied literary forms : poems, pointed questions, couplets and literary devices : antithesis, comparison and personification.



A narrative drama about why the righteous suffer and why does God allow the good to suffer.

42 CHAPTERS

Author : Unknown.

Date : Unknown.

This is the first book of the Bible to be written.

Characters : Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, Elihu.

1

A literary masterpiece with close parallels to Greek dramas and Babylonian and Egyptian folklores.



A historical account of a young Jew taken captive to Babylon who serves the government for 60 years and goes on to become the governor.

14 CHAPTERS

Author : Daniel.
Date : 535 B.C.
Characters: Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Belshazzar, Darius.



History of the return of the Jewish people from their exile in Babylon.

10 CHAPTERS

□ Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther comprise the post-captivity historical books.

Author : Probably Ezra.
Date : 450 B.C.
Characters: Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Haggai, Zechariah, Darius, Artaxerxes I, Ezra.



Story of the third return to Jerusalem from their captivity under the leadership of

12 CHAPTERS

Nehemiah who helps rebuild the city walls and the lives of the people.

□ It is the last of the historical books of the Old Testament recording the third and final return of the Jews from the captivity, the first and second return was led by Zerubbabel in 538 B.C and Ezra in 458 B.C. respectively.

Author : Nehemiah with Ezra as the editor.
Characters: Nehemiah, Ezra, Sanballat, Tobiah.



Serves as a commentary on II Samuel, traces the Davidic line, emphasizes the

29 CHAPTERS

religious history of Judah and Israel.

□ Written from a priestly point of view. □ The two books were originally one.

Author : Ezra.
Date : 430 B.C.
Characters: David, Solomon.



Describes the religious revivals of Judah under the righteous rules of the kings, highlights

36 CHAPTERS

the importance of the temple. History of Israel is totally ignored.

□ Highlights the construction of the temple. □ Serves as a commentary on I & II Kings.

Author : Ezra.
Date : 430 B.C.
Characters : Solomon, queen of Sheba, Rehoboam, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Joash, Uzziah, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Josiah.



A love lyric which many feel is an allegory of God's love for his people.

8 CHAPTERS

Author : Solomon
Date : During Solomon's reign.
Characters : King Solomon, the Shulammite woman and friends.



A pastoral story of how a Moabite woman becomes a daughter of Israel and the ancestor of David.

4 CHAPTERS

Author : Unknown.
Date : 1375-1050 B.C.
Characters : Ruth, Naomi, Boaz.



A book lamenting the fall of Jerusalem, the consequent chaos and suffering of its people.

5 CHAPTERS

Author : Jeremiah.
Date : 586 B.C.
Characters : Jeremiah, the people of Jerusalem.

□ Prophecy, ritual and wisdom form the book of Lamentations. It is written in the rhythm and style of ancient Jewish funeral songs and chants and contain 5 poems corresponding 5 Chapters.



An account of divine wisdom.

12 CHAPTERS

Author : Solomon
Date : 935 B.C.



Story of a Jewish girl who became queen of Persia and saved the people from destruction. The book is unusual in that there is no mention of God in it.

16 CHAPTERS

Author : Unknown
 Date : 483-471 B.C.
 Characters : Esther, Mordecai, King Xerxes I, Haman

GROUP - D

7 BOOKS – THE APOCRYPHA

The following are included in Catholic and Eastern orthodox Bibles and are known as DEUTEROCANONICAL books.

The protestants omit this section and call it 'THE APOCRYPHA'



A religious story emphasizing the validity of faith in times of apparent abandonment by God.

14 CHAPTERS

1-3 : Tobit's virtues and trials
 7-10 : marriage of Tobias and Sarah
 Date : 3 B.C.

Israel's role of salvation



Story which teaches Israel's role of salvation and destiny in human history

16 CHAPTERS

1-7 : peril of the Jews
 8 : deliverance
 4-16 : victory.
 Date : 2 B.C.



Praise of divine wisdom.

19 CHAPTERS

Personifies wisdom as defender of righteous.

1-5 : wisdom and human destiny
 8 : wisdom of God in the history of Israel

Condemnation of idolatry

Date : 100 B.C.



Asserts principles of
divine moral law,
moral responsibility
for sin.
Divine retribution.

51 CHAPTERS

Date : 190 B.C.



A retelling of the
history of the exile to
give the Jews of the
depression the reason
for their distress and
the assurance of
restoration.

6 CHAPTERS

1-3 : prayer of Baruch
4-5 : discourse
Date : 6 B.C.



Historical account of
Jew's struggle to
defend worship of
Israel and fidelity to
the law.

16 CHAPTERS

3-9 : the campaigns of Judas
Matthias
Date : 104 B.C.



Account of same
revolt, through
Jewish victory and
subsequent
independence.
Purpose is instruction
and edification.

15 CHAPTERS

8-13 : success of Judas
mattathias
Date : 110 B.C.

NEW TESTAMENT

- Group A – 4 Gospels
- Group B – The Acts
- Group C – 13 Letters of Paul
- Group D – 8 Catholic Letters
- Group E – The Revelation

GROUP - A

THE 4 GOSPELS

The Biography of Jesus Christ

"GOSPEL" MEANS "GOOD NEWS."

The first 3 are called "Synoptics" meaning "seen with the same eye". They cover the same events.



Includes most of Mark (about half)

Written for Jews to prove Jesus fulfilled prophecies and is the messiah.

Filled with messianic language and Old Testament references.

28 CHAPTERS

Author : Matthew
Date : 85 A.D.
Characters : Jesus, Mary, Joseph, John the Baptist, the disciples, the religious leaders, Caiaphas, Pilate, Mary Magdalene.



Earliest and shortest story of Jesus' life – his person, work and teachings.

Written for the Christians in Rome.

The first Gospel written all of which is quoted by the other Gospels except 31 verses. Records more miracles of Jesus than the others.

16 CHAPTERS

Author : John Mark
Date : 55-65 A.D.
Characters : Jesus, the 12 disciples, Pilate, the Jewish religious leaders.



About 1/3 based on Mark.

Most comprehensive Gospel.

Provides a chronological sequence.

Written for Greeks, Gentiles and other people.

Presents an accurate account of the life of Jesus as a perfect human and Saviour.

24 CHAPTERS

Author : Luke – the only known Gentile author in the New Testament.
Date : 60 A.D.
Characters : Jesus, Elizabeth, John the Baptist, Mary, the disciples, Herod the great, Pilate, Mary Magdalene.



Different from the first three Gospels.

Written for a Christian community which was involved in doctrinal disputes.

Does not present a realistic picture of Jesus rather projects him as a Universal son of God to resolve the disputes. The Gospel is more in the form of a didactic fiction.

21 CHAPTERS

- Author : Ascribed to John, an apostle, but probably by an unnamed individual.
- Date : 100-150 A.D.
- Characters : Jesus, John the Baptist, Mary, Martha, the disciples, Jesus' mother, Pilate, Mary Magdalene.

GROUP - B

THE ACTS



Early account of the birth and growth of Christian Church

Covers first 30 years after Jesus' death.

A sequel to the Gospel of Luke. A connecting link between the Gospels and the Letters.

28 CHAPTERS

- Author : Luke
- Date : 70 A.D.
- Characters : Peter, John, James, Stephen, Philip, Paul, Barnabas, Cornelius, Timothy, James (Jesus's brother), Lydia, Silas, Titus, Apollos, Agabus, Ananias, Felix, Festus, Agrippa, Luke.

GROUP - C

13 LETTERS OF PAUL

WRITTEN BEFORE THE GOSPELS... 20 TO 30 YEARS AFTER JESUS DEATH

SO THEY ARE THE EARLIEST CHRISTIAN WRITINGS

CAPTIVITY LETTERS



To introduce Paul to the Romans and to give a sample of his message before he arrives in Rome.

16 CHAPTERS

Date : 57 A.D.
 Characters : Paul, Phoebe.

Written for the Christians in Rome.



Advise to the Corinthian Church on insubordination, chastity and marriage etc.

16 CHAPTERS

Date : 57 A.D.
 Characters : Paul, Timothy, members of Chloe's household.

Written for the Church in Corinth.
 A strong, straightforward letter.



To affirm Paul's ministry, defend his authority as an apostle, and refute the false teachers in Corinth.

13 CHAPTERS

Date : 57 A.D.
 Characters : Paul, Timothy, Titus.

Written for the Church in Corinth.
 An intensely personal and autobiographical letter.



To assure the Gentile and non-Jewish Christians about their freedom in Christian faith; i.e., obeying Jewish law is not compulsory as the Judaizers taught it to be.

6 CHAPTERS

Date : 50 A.D.
 Characters : Paul, Peter, Barnabas, Titus, Abraham.

Written for the Church in Galatia.



A letter to Ephesus, a city in Asia Minor, discussing and explaining salvation and the nature and purpose of the Church.

6 CHAPTERS

Date : 62 A.D.
Characters : Paul, Tychicus.



Written when Paul was a prisoner in Rome, thanking the Philippians for the gift they had sent Paul and for strengthening their beliefs.

4 CHAPTERS

Date : 62 A.D.
Characters : Paul, Timothy, Epaphroditus, Euodia, Syntyche.



Written to the Church at Colossae to combat errors in Church and strengthen their belief in Christ.

4 CHAPTERS

Date : 62 A.D.
Characters : Paul, Timothy, Tychicus, Aristarchus, Mark, Epaphras, Onesimus.



To a Christian Philemon, to forgive his runaway slave Onesimus who had been converted and was ready to return.

1 CHAPTER

Date : 62 A.D.
Characters : Paul, Philemon, Onesimus.



Written from Corinth on Paul's first visit to praise and strengthen the faith of Thessalonian

5 CHAPTERS

Christians and to tell them of Christ's return.

Date : 51 A.D.
Characters : Paul, Timothy, Silas.



To clear the confusion on Christ's second coming.

3 CHAPTERS

Date : 52 A.D.
Characters : Paul, Timothy, Silas.

PASTORAL LETTERS



After Paul's release from his first imprisonment in Rome, his advice to Timothy, a young Church leader about countering wrong ideas and false teachings of some Ephesians. A handbook of church administration and discipline.

6 CHAPTERS

Date : 63 A.D.
Characters : Paul, Timothy.



From Rome at the time of Paul's second imprisonment giving final instructions and asking Timothy to protect community against false teachings.

This is Paul's last letter so he expresses great love for Timothy and reveals his priorities.

4 CHAPTERS

Date : 67 A.D.
Characters : Paul, Timothy, Luke, Mark.



Written before Timothy letters advising Titus, a young Greek, converted to Christianity and in charge of the churches on the island of Crete, on church administration and appeal to co-workers to help them in Christianizing the social world.

3 CHAPTERS

Date : 62 A.D.
Characters : Paul, Titus.

GROUP - D

8 CATHOLIC LETTERS



Author unknown

13 CHAPTERS

treats the dignity of the person of Christ. God's ultimate word of salvation.	1-10 10-13 Date	: : :	The superiority of Christ's covenant. fidelity to the new covenant. 66 A.D.
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Probably by a relative of Jesus who became head of the Church at Jerusalem.
 Teaches necessity of good works to accompany faith.

5 CHAPTERS

2 3 5 Date	: : : :	14-16 faith and work control of tongue instructions 62 A.D.
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From Rome to Christian churches in Asia Minor.
 Teaches the value of Christ's death and resurrection.

5 CHAPTERS

1-4 5 Date	: : :	Baptismal exhortation Advise for the persecuted. 64-67 A.D.
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Exhorts readers to be faithful and blameless.
 Helps build hope for a second coming.
 Warns against false teachers.

3 CHAPTERS

1 Date	: :	Christian calling false teachers. 100 A.D.
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All concern various theological matters.

5+1+1 = 7 CHAPTERS

I: 1-2 4-5 II. 1:4-6 Date	: : : :	walking in the light. love and faith. Primary of love. 100 A.D.
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Possibly by the brother
of James

1 CHAPTER

To Christians who had
back-tracked to pagan
immoralities.

1 : 5-16 wicked intruders
1 : 17-23 exhortations
Date : 90 A.D.

GROUP - E

THE REVELATION



- struggle of Christ and
his followers against
Satan and his
cohorts.

22 CHAPTERS

Author : John, the apostle
Date : 75 A.D.

defeat of Satan and
ultimate triumph of
the kingdom of God.

- Covers first 30 years
after Jesus' death.

Revelation was composed about the year 95 A.D. during the reign of the emperor Domitian. This was the time of severe persecution of the Church throughout the empire. Those who resisted were murdered. The author, whose name is John, probably held a position of leadership and was regarded highly by many Christian communities. He has endured much but had clung to the faith. The book is intended to give hope to those who are near despair. The book is written in a "apocalyptic" form, i.e., it uses symbolic imagery to communicate hope in the midst of persecution.

NUMBER SYMBOLISM

- 3 – divine fullness
- 6 – one less than seven,
therefore, a symbol of
great imperfection
- 7 – fullness, perfection
- 666 – the "number of beast"
which refers to Nero

THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF ENGLISH BIBLE



Three Sources of Biblical manuscripts:

1. **The Codex Sinaiticus**, originally a codex of the Greek Bible belonging to the fourth century. Purchased from Russia in 1933 by Great Britain and is now in the British Museum.
2. **The Codex Alexandrinus**, probably written in the 5th century, now in the British Museum. It contains the whole Greek Bible with the exception of forty lost leaves.
3. **The Codex Vaticanus**, in the Vatican library at Rome, originally contained the whole Bible but parts are lost. Written probably about the fourth century.

A FEATHER-BED TO CATCH A FALLING CHRISTIAN✕

Lew Wallace, a very famous General and a literary genius, once made an attempt to destroy Christianity during his youth, and started writing a book. While writing the second chapter of his book, he suddenly found himself on his knees, crying out: "My Lord, and my God." Later, Wallace wrote *Ben Hur*, the greatest novel that has ever been written concerning the time of Christ. Like him Sadhu Sundar Singh and C.S.Lewis, once typical skeptics, later had different stories and experiences of the same kind.

Robert Green Ingersoll, the famous orator of 19th century America, stood alone on the crossroad of the crucified Christ, and holding cross and criticism in both hands he could tell the truth about the Holy Bible publicly. "Somebody ought to tell the truth about the Bible," says Ingersoll, "The preachers dare not, because they would be driven from their pulpits.... Politicians dare not, they would be defeated. Editors dare not, they would lose subscribers. Merchants dare not, because they might lose customers.... Even clerks dare not, because they might be discharged. And so I thought I would do it myself." (*The Works* VII:453)

Neither Wallace, nor Lewis could dare to tell the truth about the Holy Bible. They remained royal sinners in the matters of morality. They were staunch believers and serious and sincere readers of the Bible. But a large number of people

* This is a quotation from Erasmus Darwin, the grand father of Charles Darwin.

who call themselves Christians read the Bible at random. Those who read it regularly do not understand it. They miss many rare, good and beautiful passages of it. Admit it or not, I would like to tell a truth that the most devoted Bible readers simply miss the true and tender words dropped from the lips of Jesus. They simply read the underlined words pronounced at the pulpit. This is very easy, because the Bible is a convenient book to quote and difficult book to explain by any sane or insane mind. Even Satan can quote the Bible to his side. Jesus did the same by quoting the Old Testament and claimed himself as Messiah. Paul followed the foot-prints of his master by quoting a few verses out of the Gospels, mixed it with his vision and could easily create his creed to attract the gentiles.

Beauties of the Bible

The Book of Books consisting of 39 books of the Old and 27 books of the New is in total 66 books, composed through forty generations for around 1,500 years, by thirty six poets called Prophets.

From *Genesis* to the *Book of Revelation* every word is the word of God. Written in various periods by various inspired historians and poets this two-in-one book called the Holy Bible carries stories, poetry and parables, be it the burning bush from which God spoke to Abraham or Joseph and his coat of many colours; or David playing his harp to Saul and slaying Goliath. Every incident of the ancient men with the tongue of the Hebrew and the idiom of Hellenistic Greek take us to the world of the *Psalms*, the *Song of Solomon* and the *Book of Lamentations*.

One will be impressed by the wisdom of *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and the three chapters of the *Sermon on the Mount* and Paul's great love poems. It contains not only poetry but history, myths, ethics, prophecy, parables and legends. It is a golden synthesis of good and bad, beautiful and ugly,

serene and savage and tender elements of life, love and literature. That may be the reason for which it becomes a handbook even for the non-theists and the Christians.

While considering the Christian Scripture we give credit to Emperor Constantine who called the first Ecumenical Councils at Nicea in 325 A.D. and in Rome in 382 A.D. in order to compile the New Testament. Out of hundreds of biographies of Jesus (Lk-1) the Council of Rome voted for the four Gospels which were akin to the Paulian Creed. In that way the four Gospels were accepted for the New Testament and the rest literature regarding the biography of Jesus were either rejected as "apocryphal" or destroyed for good.

I accept one thing about the Bible that it is among the best sellers. The American Bible Society alone prints and distributes more than nine million Bibles in English and ten times that number of portions of the Bible such as Gospels and Psalms are sold or distributed. Hardly is there any Christian in the world who does not own at least one copy of the Bible in some form or other. Its passages are quoted for every purpose by professors and politicians, by vicars and teachers. Even the Private and Public School authorities force this best seller into the hands of the children for better moral guidance. In spite of its popularity, I'm forced to say that it remains far from being the world's best-read book.

Least Understood Book

The *Worldwide Church of God* admitted that "the least understood book of all books is the World's BEST SELLER" ("Why Study the Bible in the Space Age?" *Ambassador College Correspondence Course*. California : Worldwide Church of God, 1977:5). This proves that in spite of its worldwide popularity the world still remains a Bible-illiterate.

Quoting a Digest survey report Claire Coy rightly remarks that nearly a third of all "Protestants" never read the Bible or almost never did; that more than half the Catholics never read it and that an even larger number of Jews did not. Among individual denominations, the Baptists were found to be the most devoted Bible readers; 48 percent read at least once a week and 21 percent nearly every day.

Percentages of the total went this way : 34 percent of those surveyed read Scriptures at least once a week; 12 percent, every day; 12 percent never; 22 percent, every few weeks, and 28 percent, almost never." ("The Bible: Least-Read Best-Seller" *The New-Time Religion*. N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961 : 204)

Those who read the Bible many times as a ritual and believe every word of it as the spoken word of God, they do not read to understand, rather to maintain the ritual by chanting Latin, counting beads or spinning a prayer wheel. All is done not to doubt but to believe.

By the Jews for the Jews

Unlike Herbert W. Armstrong, the Founder and the Chief exponent of the *Worldwide Church of God*, I cannot claim that, "Either All the Bible is TRUE or all of it is FALSE." I do not say that the Bible is absolutely true or absolutely false.

For me it is the story of a small group of savage people who under a patriarch called Abraham moved from Ur of the Chaldees, in Mesopotamia westwards toward Canaan or Palestine around 1900 BC. In course of time the descendants suffered severely from famine and proceeded to Egypt and were enslaved by the Pharaoh. Then by the help of Moses, a Hebrew born in Egypt, they came through an indirect route back to Canaan, their homeland. They established their Nation through Moses, Joshua, Judges, Saul and David.

Inspite of its lengthy history I donot think the Bible is Universal. Both the Testaments are Jewish in nature and join the mainstream of Jewish nationalism. The chosen people of God were the most miserable people of the world. God provides them a rocky land and they were "kicked about as a political football between the world powers of Mesopotamia and Egypt", and at last disbelieve a progressive Jew whose name was Jesus and crucified him. Their unworthy idea of God is undoubtedly a cruel, vindictive, jealous and capricious God. The development of the idea of God can be traced according to Rolland Emerson Wolfe from "gods in tree, springs, and stones in the days of the patriarchs, to the God of Mount Sinai in the time of Moses, who was later carried up to Palestine in a box called the ark, then became Yahweh the God of the Hebrew people and of Palestine, and finally God, the one and only God of this world." (*Introducing the Bible*. Boston: Church of the Larger Fellowship, 1979:VII)

Influences and Impacts

Even Dr Wolfe doubts the originality of the Bible and shows how the Hebrews borrowed richly from their neighbours, which speaks of their cosmopolitan spirit. In Dr Wolfe's words :

The communion of the bread and wine was practised among the Canaanites when Abraham first came into Palestine, was administered to him by priest-king Melchizedek (Gdn 14:18-20), was adopted by the Hebrews, and later by Christians. The tithe, or giving of the tenth, came in at the same occasion and likewise became an adoption of both Judaism and Christianity. The God Yahweh, or Jehovah as usually mistransliterated, was the god of the Midianites who was discovered by Moses who introduced the Hebrews to this deity at Mount Sinai, and henceforth he became the "god of Israel".

Certain parts of the Bible have been borrowed from other cultures and peoples. Although it has all been colored over with a late Hebrew monotheistic tinting, not one story in Genesis 1-11 is Hebrew or Palestinian. All of that body of material was borrowed from the lands of the east, mostly Mesopotamia, and now by archaeology we have discovered the originals. Psalms 19 and 104 are basically Egyptian psalms, written by Pharaoh Ikhnaton, were learned by the Hebrews while in bondage in Egypt, were carried with them when they made their exodus to Palestine, and have been used by Jews and Christians ever since. The book of Job was originally Arabic and was borrowed from Arabia, and now has become the Shakespeare of the Bible. Even where there has not been the taking over of whole literary sections there is still much borrowing of individual concepts and figures.

Today we are seeing that even Jesus was influenced into adopting certain of his ideas and emphases from the sects who lived in the Dead Sea area. One could go on to show that many of the ideas, beliefs, and ritualistic practices that have become fundamental in the Judaeo-Christian tradition have been borrowed from other peoples. This was almost inevitable, since our Bible was produced at the cross roads of the ancient world. (Ibid.,VI)

These borrowings did not help both Hebrew and Greek scriptures to go beyond discrepancies and contradictions to establish a systematic creed. It made Thomas Paine outrageous and outspoken in his *The Age of Reason*: "As to the book called the Bible, it is blasphemy to call it the word of God. It is a book of lies and contradictions, and a history of bad times and bad men. There are but a few good characters in the whole book."

In *Dood's Rebelations*, Carl W.Dood exposes the inner truth of the Holy Bible in the following poem :

The kids do try to believe your Bible
And with your wish abide.

Playing Dr.Jekyll on the week-days,
And on Sunday, Mr.Hyde. p.6.

x x x x x

Do we cling to this Bible
For comfort or from fear,
Or is it lack of time
To read and get things clear ?
Me-thinks it's not thru ignorance
The Bible is so strong;
It's the dollar and position
That makes man go along. p.18.

x x x

I'll bet that must've been a lark
For man and beast on Noah's ark-
The extra beasts he took along
For all the others to feed upon.
It must've raised up quite a stink,
And still does, that's what I think.p.21.

[Oregon : Dood's Relations, 1968]

Barbara Wootton rightly quotes in her "foreword" to the book entitled *Vision and Realism* written by Jim Herrick: "Bible is a revoltingly odious Jew production, which has been for ages the idol of all sorts of blockheads, the glory of knaves, and the disgust of wise men. It is a history of lust, sodomies, wholesale slaughtering, and horrible depravity." (London: G.W.Foote & Co. 1982: V)

I apologetically admit that my intention, in no way, is to cast aspiration on any person or creed. But I myself refuse to accept anything which will not stand the acid test of reason. If you think my problems are genuine and true the Church

ought to go out of business. Faith may be a virtue, but it is no use burying one's head in the sand. Dear Friends in Christ ! Let us reason together (Is 1 : 18) and prove all things. (Thes 5:21) Always be ready to give an answer to everyman that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. (1 Pet 3:15)



BIBLE : THE WORD ABOUT GOD

The Christians claim that the Bible is the inspired words of God, so it is infallible, accurate, complete and unique in all ways. Therefore Paul says : "The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God." (2 Tim 3:16)

If we examine the statement made by Paul, his Greek term "pasa graphe" literally means "every scripture is inspired by God and is useful..." or "every inspired Scripture is useful..." This idea divided the Greek-language experts. The debate continues over the Greek word "graphe" which also means "writing" or "book" and refers to the Old Testament. As New Testament did not exist till the second century AD Jesus must have talked about the Old Testament to his disciples. So the Jews said that he had come to fulfil the laws of Moses. If anyone breaks that or teaches other things he shall be lost in the Kingdom of heaven. (Mt 5:17-18; Lk 16-17) Again Jesus affirms: "Heaven and earth shall disappear, but my works stand sure forever." (Mk 13:31)

When Jesus said "it is written " or "the Scriptures tell" he definitely meant the Old Testament verses. If any verse is to be called the words of God it should be Jeremiah (36:1-6) in which God directs a prophet to "Get a scroll and write down all his messages" from the days of Josiah up to Jeremiah's day. The subsequent verses however, indicate that even in this instance "Jeremiah dictated" to Baruch, and Baruch wrote down all the prophecies, but there is no indication that Baruch, the writer, was himself inspired by God. In spite of that it is the Christian belief that the whole Bible is never man-made

but a piece of Godly inspiration. It is God's refined and final words to mankind. If you ask them why do you think so they would reply : God says so in the Bible. (2 Tim 3 :16)

I am often confused with this statement. If it is the word of God, it should be free from error from cover to cover. Words like "Soul" and "Spirit" both in Hebrew and Greek have many different meanings throughout the Bible. If God is the real author of the Bible, why did He select words with several meanings, knowing well that this would ultimately cause confusion and contradiction.

Author of the Pentateuch

1. When did the Bible become a book of the present form ? Who gave the title page of the Old and New Testament ? Is it not a fact that these books were not written in the order in which they are printed today ?

2. Was the Old Testament composed in Hebrew -- a language without vowels ? Can any one write anything only in consonants ? Does the oldest Old Testament have any chapterisation or verse division? Were the punctuation marks known to the Jews ? Was there any dictionary to understand or interpret the Hebrew Scripture ? With all such difficulties how can we think the present Bible is the only true translation of the Hebrew ?

3. How can you justify that Moses was the author of the first books known to the Jews as the Torah or the Law ? Can we deny the fact that as late as ninth century BC, after the death of Solomon, the priests or scholars who began to collect the traditional writings were known as *J* and *E* -- the *J* source located in Judah means Jahveh and *E* means the group of Elohim living in the northern kingdom of Israel ?

4. If Moses did not get the Old Testament until the days of Josiah and Ezra gave the Pentateuch to the Jews and Nehemiah prepared the manuscripts about the kings and

prophets when were the books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ruth, Ecclesiastes added to the Old Testament ?

5. Is not it a fact that the Pentateuch was composed in Canaan or Jerusalem during the time of Solomon, a thousand years before Christ, which corresponds with the Homeric era, about five hundred years after the death of Moses ?

6. Is there any difference between the language of the Pentateuch and the rest of the books of the Old Testament ? Does it not prove that all these books were written during the same time ?

7. Is it not a fact that the Hebrews assumed that God spoke Hebrew, therefore, books written only in Hebrew were admitted into the Old Testament, and the Greek scriptures were excluded ?

8. If there is an uninterrupted chain of authority in the whole of the Old Testament how did the continuity of the Torah cease prior to the time of Josiah, the Son of Amon ? Was it not lost when Nebuchadnezzar took the Jews as captive of Babylon ?

9. If Pentateuch, the Bible of the Samaritans, was the work of Moses it should eliminate the 20th chapter of Exodus because Moses obtained the code from the code of Hammurabi, who existed a thousand years before Abraham.

Between Moses and the Pentateuch

10. Could Moses write in a language that never existed during his period and foretell the events of his death and burial in future time such as : " The people of Israel mourned for him for thirty days on the plains of Moab" ? (Dt 34: 5-6, 8) Does Moses not refer to the persons of a later date (Gn 36:31-32) and wrote about himself in third person ?

11. If the Pentateuch was written by Moses himself why did he give two accounts of the Ten Commandments, in the twentieth chapter and again in the thirty-fourth chapter of the same Exodus ?

12. Moses gave his Torah to the priests to preserve it in the Ark of the Covenant which they used to bring out once in every seven years on a feast day. But that was lost before the time of Solomon. When Solomon opened it he found only two tablets on which the Ten Commandments had been written (1 Kg 8:9). Then how did people get the Torah as it is available today ?

13. Is it not a fact that the city of Dan as referred to by Moses in Genesis (14:14) was called Laish ? It became known as Dan until the time of Judges (18:27-29) when the tribe of Dan conquered the city of Laish and changed its name.

14. The children of Israel, after conquering Palestine during the era of Joshua, changed its name from Kiriath Arba to Hebron, as recorded by Joshua (14:15). Thus, what is stated in the book of *Genesis* was written by someone who lived after the conquest, and not by was not Moses.

15. Can Moses refer to himself as "the humblest man on earth" (Nu 12:3) and can he boast of himself with the words: "there has never been another prophet like Moses" (Dt 34:10), if he himself is the author of these two books ?

16. Is it not a fact that Abraham lived some 900 years before the word 'Abraham' appeared in the Bible ? Like Abraham Moses seems to have died some 300 years before the first five books of the Bible were written ? Does it not go without saying that Moses has nothing to do with Torah as David to the *Psalms* ?

17. In *Genesis* (36:31) it is said: "Now these were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel." The same line is cited in I

Chronicles (1: 43-50) that tells about Saul, the first king, who ruled 356 years after the death of Moses. Can a dead author record the future events in past tense? To me either Moses was not the author of these verses or these lines were written on the margin, but the copier put it in *Genesis* by mistake as part of the original.

18. Can Moses write : "The children of Israel ate manna forty years until they came to an inhabited land; they ate manna until they came to the border of the Land of Canaan"(Ex 16 : 35)? Either the book of Exodus was written after the manna had ceased to appear or Ezra might have added this statement.

19. Can Genesis be the work of a single author when the names Jehovah and Elohim are used distinctly in two separate contexts? If it is the work of Moses who are the authors of the following J₁, J₂, J₃, E₁, E₂, E₃, P₁, P₂, P₃, D₁, D₂, D₃, R₁, R₂, R₃ indications?

Authorship of the Old Testament

20. If the Bible is worthy of credence why does it quote at least twenty books that are missing, such as the Book of War (Nu 21:14), the Book of Jasher (Jos 10:13), three Books of Solomon (1 Ki 4:32-34), the Book of the Kingdom by the Prophet Samuel (1 Sa 10:25), the Chronicles of Samuel, the Chronicles of the Prophet Nathan, the Chronicles of Gad the Seer (1 Ch 29:29,30), the Book of Shemaiah and Iddo the Seer, the Prophet Ahijah, the Visions of Iddo the Seer (2 Ch 9:29), the Book of the Prophet Jehu, son of Hanani (2 Ch 20:34), the Prophet Isaiah's book about King Uzziah (2 Ch 26:22), the Vision of Isaiah about Hezekiah (2 Ch 32:32), the Eulogy of Jeremiah for Josiah (2 Ch 35:25), and the Book of the Chronicles (Ne 12:23)? We are supposed to presume that these books were either lost or intentionally suppressed.

21. What we call the Bible today cannot be called the Law of the Lord, rather the false pen of the scribes (Je 8:8); and the prophet who teaches lies, (Is 9:15) whose lies have led us astray (Am 2:4). The New Testament too is not free from lies. St Paul, the self-appointed apostle of Christ, to convert the gentiles, admitted that he lied for the sake of greater good (2 Cor 12; Rom 3). Is it wrong to say then that the Bible is a book of lies?

22. Is it a fact that Chrysostom, who named the Bible, rejected six books out of the sixty six such as *Esther, Jonah, Hebrews, James, Jude and Revelation*? Don't some branches of the Syriac Church delete *2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude and Revelation* from the New Testament?

23. Why did the Catholics include *Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus*, the two *Books of Machabees* and the various sections of other Books in their Bible, which are omitted in the Protestant Bible?

24. Can *Esther* and *Song of Solomon* be considered the inspired Books of the Bible when no reference is made to any God or rituals?

25. Are the Christian Fathers Irenaeus, Chrysostom, Clement of Alexandria and Theodoret correct when they say that all the Books were burned during the Babylonian captivity by Esdras? Does it not prove, after reading 2 Kings 22:8 and 2 Chronicles 34:14, that the Jews did not know of the existence of the Books of Moses prior to 628 BC? In that case is not the Bible that we read and preach the same Bible that was read by Christ and the Apostles?

26. When James Bruce discovered the Ethiopian manuscripts of the lost Book of Enoch in 1774 which was very much in use during the time of Christ and from which Christ himself had quoted, how is it missing from the Old Testament today?

27. Can David be the author of Psalms when the captivity did not happen until about five hundred years after his death?

28. Has not Isaiah been (37: 1-3, 5, 10-12, 14-16, 37-38) plagiarised in toto from II Kings (19:1-3, 5, 11-12, 14-15, 36-37)?

29. Can *Joshua* be written by Joshua where he himself in the last four verses (24:29-32) has decribed his own death ?

30. Who is the author of the *Book of Judges* -- Phinehas, Hezekiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel or Ezra ?

31. Can you deny the fact that the *Book of Daniel* was written to convince the Jews that their God would miraculously protect them if they refuse to obey the sacrilegious king, Antiochus Epiphanes ?

32. How far David is believable when he states several wrong historical facts such as Belshazzar was not the king of Babylon; the name of the last king was Nabonides; Babylon was taken peacefully, by guile, not by bloodshed; it was Cyrus, not Darius the Mede, who took Babylon; Darius was not the son of Ahasuerus (Xerxes), but of his father?

33. Who among Hezekiah, Ezra or Samuel was the author of *Ruth* ? Can it be called a historical document or is it a household story ?

34. There are disagreements concerning the author of *Ecclesiastes*. The Jewish scholar, Limchi, believed that the prophet Isaiah wrote *Ecclesiastes*. Talmudic scholars have claimed that it was written by Hezekiah. Herodotus thought that Zerubbabel had written it for his son. Yahn believes the book has been written after the Babylonian Captivity. Zarkol claims that it was written from the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Who among them is authentic?

35. Is it not a fact that in the middle of the 18th century Jean Astruc convinced a few more lovers of the Bible like Eichhorn, De Wette and Julius Welhausen to say it openly that the Old Testament was a fraud and half a century before, towards the end of the 17th century, a Dutchman known as Spinoza questioned the authorship of Moses and proved Pentateuch as the work of Ezra? Can *Exodus* 20 be the work of Moses? Can one prove the Old Testament older than 9th Century BC?

36. Is it not a fact that when Queen Victoria came to the throne Bible became an exact history book and people started believing that the world was created in 4004 BC. But this idea ended with the end of the Victorian Age when the exploration of the geologists and physicists proved that the Biblical account of creation was largely a fable and folk-lore.

New Testament on the Cross Road

37. Who may be the authors of many of the books where "according to" is added? Neither the signature nor mark or thumb impression of these authors is present anywhere before or after their Gospel. If Matthew and John were the authors of their respective gospels, then who does the pronouns "he" and "him" for Matthew or for John? (Mt 9:9; Jn 19:35)

38. Can one date the 27 books of the New Testament? Do you agree that the books were not written in the order in which they are printed? Which biography among the four came first? What were the original sources?

39. Jesus wrote nothing so did his disciples. Why to write the biography of one who was expected to return shortly to their midst? If we agree that his biography was produced in Palestine around 50 AD it should be in Aramaic as remembered and heard by the disciples.

40. Was the New Testament written in *Koine*, the tongue used by uneducated people of Eastern parts of the Roman Empire or in *Aramaic* a tongue used by the Palestinian Jews ?

41. Can one believe the New Testament and the sayings of Jesus as true because it remained in oral transmission for 35-70 years in *Aramaic* before Matthew, Mark, Luke and John translated it into Greek ?

42. Why did God inspire four Gospels when one was enough ? Doctor Davidson and Irenaeus argue that as there are four universal winds, four corners of the globe and four seasons in a year so there are four Gospels. But Robert Green Ingersoll added a sentence saying, because a donkey has four legs so there are four Gospels.

43. If Gospels means *good news* why are there hundreds of inconsistencies and contradictions on all important matters in it ? So the Gospels are not *good news* but disasters of yester years. That may be the reason that Jesus, the beloved son of God, did not write a single word of it and these Gospels were unknown to Peter, Paul and the early church Fathers.

44. Is it a fact that before Henry VIII, when the little known verses of Chaucer and perhaps of Skelton were known, the Bible was never read in churches ?

45. When was the New Testament added to the Old Testament ? Did the Christians not use the books of the Jews for 150 years and the early missionaries like Peter and Paul ignorant about the Gospels ?

46. Why did Chrysostom, who named the Bible, reject the Book of Revelation and Calvin exclude Revelation as unintelligible ? Did not the Greek Catholics at the Council of Jerusalem finally accept *Revelation* and that too in 1672 ?

47. Is it not a fact that Matthew (27:9) describes Jeremiah as the speaker of a particular quotation which in fact comes from the prophecy of Zechariah ? (Zc 11:13)

48. Matthew's Gospel misreads *Chronicles* when it refers to Zechariah as the son of Barachiah, slain in the Temple between the altar and the sanctuary (23:35) whereas 2 *Chronicles* (24:20-22) explicitly states that Zechariah was executed in the court of the Temple, and was the son of Jehoiada, not Barachiah.

49. Irenaeus said that Mark, Peter's helper and translator, wrote about the things that Peter and Paul had preached, after Peter's death. Larrender said: " I do not think that Mark wrote his account of the Gospel before AD 63 or 64, because it is inconceivable that Peter could have been living in Rome before that time." This is similar to the views of Irenaeus and Basil. They were convinced that Mark wrote his Gospel account in AD 66, and this proves that Peter did not see *The Gospel of Christ According to Mark*.

50. The non-inspired character of the book of Luke is obvious from its introduction: "In as much as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which are most surely believed among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed" (Lk1:1-4). Other ancient Christian authorities agree. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon (AD 178), said: "The things which Luke learned from the disciples, he relayed to us." Jerome said : "Paul was not the only source for Luke as Paul himself had never met Christ in person. Luke learned the Gospel from him and the other apostles."

51. Did Jesus begin his ministry after John the Baptist had been jailed (Mk 1 : 14) or before he was jailed ? (Jn 3 : 22-24)

52. Who wrote the epistle to the *Hebrews* ? If it is by Paul why did he not start it by his usual greetings ? How could he be so different in style and diction, which seems to have a more sophisticated rhetoric rather than a simple and direct approach ? Is it not a pious lie to claim that the epistle to the *Hebrews* was written by Paul ? The early church Father Origen (AD 185-254) rightly remarked : "Who wrote the Epistle only God knows."

53. The letter to the *Hebrews* was written by Clement of Rome and translated by Luke the evangelist. Hippolytus (AD 220) denied that Paul wrote it, as did Numanos, the bishop of Rome (AD 251). Tertullian, the bishop of Carthage (AD 200) said that Barnabas wrote it. Gaius, the bishop of Rome (AD 212) said that Paul wrote 13 epistles but not the letter to the *Hebrews*. Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage (AD 248), never quoted from it and Ireneaus rejected it. This means that it is not a canonical book. Is it not a fact that Erasmus, one of the leaders of the Reformation, declared that the *Epistle to the Hebrews* was not written by Paul and Martin Luther condemned the *Epistle of James* as "epistle of straw"?

54. Is it not a fact that Nice and Laodocia Councils invented creeds like the Apostle's creeds, the Nicean creed, and the Athanasian creed and out of the leads of rubbish that were presented, they voted four to be Gospels, and others to be Epistles ?

55. If the reminder of the Pauline Epistles are generally supposed to have been penned by Paul after his arrival as a state-prisoner in Rome, the question comes whether it was in AD 60 or 61 or 62? How long did he live there in his own hired house, and when was he eventually martyred ?

56. Does it not show that the Bible can not be the word of God but word about God, entirely set in a theological context to serve theological purposes ?

Quiz for Theologians

57. What was Moses' real name ?

58. How old was Abraham when he was circumcised ?

59. What religion was Abraham's mother's and father's ?

60. God confused the language of men at the Tower of Babel or is it the place where Solomon kept his wives ?

61. Why did Solomon, when asked by his mother, Bathsheba, to allow Abishag to marry Adonijah, deny her request and put Adonijah to death ?

62. Was Absalom actually buried in Absalom's Tomb in the Kidron Valley ?

63. What type of cross was Jesus nailed on ? How many nails were used when he was crucified ?

64. Were Adam and Eve Christians ?



HOW HOLY IS THE HOLY BIBLE ?

Often I ask a question to myself: Why does mankind go for a Bible ? May be to retain a myth or to reform the brute. Child sacrifice was too much for the Jews and it was stopped suddenly when God examined Abraham and it was substituted by sacrificing a ram instead of his beloved son Isaac. Both Sabbath and Passover retain the myth of God's rest and festival which was long forgotten. Job was an answer to Ezekiel, and Ruth stood against Ezra and Nehemiah as far as mixed marriages were concerned. So the created optimism against the utter pessimism of *Ecclesiastes*.

Many Christians disown Old Testament and own the New Testament for their belief. They forget that without Old Testament New Testament is empty. Jesus too admitted : "I do not come to abolish the laws and prophets, but to fulfil them." (Mt 5:17)

Believe it or not Bible is the word of God. Because time and again it is recorded in the Bible : "Thus says the Lord," "The word of the Lord came to," and "God said." So it is highly claimed by the Christians as infallible rule of faith and practice for all mankind.

If Holy Ghost is "language personified" we are bound to believe not a few but all writers in the Bible as inspired. The Prophets were Poets and the Poets were social agitators. Except the *Song of Songs* and *Ecclesiastes* all books included in the Holy Bible are political, not religious.

I politely can say that it cannot be the word of God, rather "the word of man about God." John rightly says: " No man has seen God at any time" (1:18), how can they hear the voice of God ? Now after a thorough reading of the Bible I place these questions to our regular Bible readers and dare to quote Robert G. Ingersoll who says :

Give me the storm and tempest of thought and action, rather than the dead calm of ignorance and faith. Banish me from Eden when you will : but first let me eat up the fruit of the tree of knowledge.(*The Works* III)

The Unholy Passages

65. Can one call the Bible holy after reading the unholy stories, the voluptuous debaucheries, pornographic view of sex ? Can a conscious parent suggest the children to read the following passages where Cain married his sister (Gn 4:17), righteous man impregnates his two daughters while drunk (Gn 19:30-38), God grabs Jacob's testicles (Gn 32:35), man sleeps with father's concubine (Gn 32:22), man ordered to place hand under father's thigh (Gn 47:29), female servants can be used for sex (Ex 21:7-11), paying father to have sex with his daughter (Dt 22:28-29), another man shall lie with groom's bride first (Dt 28:30), man touches woman's "hole of the door" (Ss 5:4), and sex organs and ejaculate of harlot's lovers compared to asses and horses? (Ezk 23:20)

66. Are sensible parents safe enough to prescribe their children the following few Biblical references for better moral guidance ? They are full of obscene, vulgar and filthy language. To say the least is better. Here are some examples:

Genesis- 16:2; 19:8; 26; 29:31; 30; 34; 38:8-11; 39.

Exodus- 4:24-27; 22:18; 34:15.

Leviticus- 15:16-33, 17:7 ; 18:20; 5-6.

Numbers- 15:32-36, 39;31:17-18.

Deuteronomy- 15:12-18; 21:10-14, 15-23; 23:1-2; 24:1,5.

1 Samuel- 25:22, 34 (conversation addressed by David to a lady)

Judges- 2:17; 8:33;19.

2 Samual- 11; 12:24; 13; 16: 21-22.

1 Kings- 1:1-4; 14:10; 16:11, 21:21.

2 Kings- 9:8; 18:27.

Nehemiah- 3:4.

Psalms- 73:27; 106.

Ecclesiastes- 3:19, 20.

Isaiah- 23;46:3.

Ezekiel- 4:12,15;6:9;16:28; 23.

Hosea- 4:12; 6:10; 9:1.

Nahum- 3:4.

Malachi- 2:3.

1 Corinthians-14:34-35.

The Revelation-17:2.

67. Is it necessary to place your hand "under the thigh" (sex organs) while swearing sacred oaths (Gn 24:2-3, 9), cut off son's foreskin with stone (Ex 4:25), children born out of wedlock condemned as bastards till 10th generation (Dt 23:2), virgin daughter to be sacrificed to God (Jdg 11), for every man to eat the flesh of his own arm (Is 9:20), eating dung and drinking piss (Is 36:12), and eating bread defiled with dung. (Ezk 4:12-15)

68. Should a Holy Scripture and a God of the Universe use the language which does not meet the decency of the day? Religious parents censor these words of God when He addressed to Nineveh : "I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, and I will show the nations thy nakedness and the kingdoms thy shame and I will cast abominable filth upon thee" (Na 3:5,6). His lascivious intentions toward the "haughty" daughters of Israel are : "Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts" (Is 3:17). Then God expressed His sex impulse in a language which is foreign

even to the rapist: "Thou shalt pluck off thine own breasts."
(Ez 23:34)

69. Can a God of beauty and decency ask Ezekiel to cook publicly his bread with "dung which cometh out of man" (Ezek. 4:12-15)? Though Ezekiel was wise enough to substitute it with cow's dung. Is it wise to use language such as: Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces. (Mal 2:3)

Marriage and Moral

70. Lot, the nephew of Abraham was one of the pious men whom God saved from the cities of the plain (Gn 19:15). Is it not cowardly on his part to offer his daughters to mob of sodomites (Gn 19:1-8) which was regarded as an honourable one because he sought thereby to save two angles from filthy outrage?

71. Is it moral for Abraham to marry the daughter of his father (Gn 20:12) and call his wife as sister and allow Pharaoh to take her to his royal palace only to get sheep, oxen, asses, servants and camels in return (Gn 12 : 11-19; 20:2-18)? *Genesis* (12:11-13) claims that Abraham did so; so that it would go well with him and that he could live. Does not such a story provoke the reader to follow Abraham's example and tell lies? Did he not play the same trick with King Abimelech in order to receive a thousand piece of silver (Gn 20 :16)? Is not the same trick repeated by his son Isaac when he passes his wife off as his sister? (Gn 25 :21-26)

72. Is it not a fact that Solomon was wiser than all men (1 Kg 4:31; 3:12) because he loved many strange women and had seven hundred wives, princesses and three hundred concubines? (1 Kg 11:1,3)

73. Can we deny the fact that God repeatedly condones incest like daughters sleeping with father, cousin with cousin, and brother marrying sister? (Gn 20:12; 19:33; 29:9-30)

74. Can you approve the marriage of Jacob to his two sisters and take concubines too (Gn 29:23-30; 30:1-10) though this was prohibited according to the Law of Moses in Leviticus ? (18:18)

75. Is it not sin for Reuben to commit incest with his father's concubine (Gn 35:22; 69:3-4)? How to accept Judah who had sons by his daughter-in-law Tamar ? (Gn 38:13-27)

76. Should Abraham be spared for marrying his father's daughter (Lv 20:17), and Amran, the father of Moses, for marrying his aunt (Ex 6:20; Lv 20:19)? Had not Gideon many wives and concubines ? (Jdg 8: 30-31)

77. Is it not proper on the part of God to employ lady messengers or lady angels while interviewing women such as Manoah's wife (Jdg 13, 6, 3, 9, 24), Elkanah's wife (1 Sam 1,2, 17, 20) and the Shunnamite and Elisha (2 Kings 4, 11, 16, 17) who conceived after their interviews with men of God ?

The Rib Woman

78. Is it not a fact that God is a male chauvinist, who created the first woman out of one of the ribs of Adam, the first man, and did not feel like putting soul into her ?

79. Can we prove that woman is made for man not man for woman? (1 Cor 11:2-16)

80. Can a woman be proud of a God who cursed the woman world with the words: "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be thy husband, and he shall rule over thee ?(Gn 3:16)

81. Does not the Bible tell that maternity is a sin (Gn 3: 16), rape virgins instead of male angels (Gn19:1-8), virgins are listed as war booty (Nu 31:16-35), woman raped in city, she and her rapist both stoned to death (Dt 22:23-24), she must marry her rapist (Dt 22:28-29), if woman touches foe's penis, her hand shall be cut off ? (Dt 25: 11-12)

82. Hundreds and thousands of persons have been killed as witches including Joan of Arc because the most benevolent

God orders: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Ex 22:18). Denying witchcraft means denying the Bible (2 Ch 33:6; Is 8:19; 1 Sa 15:23; Mi 5:12; Nu 3:4; Lv 20:77; Gal 5:20). That makes reformer Martin Luther to say: "I should have no compassion on these witches; I would burn them all."

83. Is sex a sin (Rom 6:13; 1 Thes 4:4)? Can a man be saved if he defiled himself with the women (Rev 14:4)? Is it sinful to desire a woman? (Mt 5:27-29)

84. Is motherhood sinful, especially if the baby is a girl? (Lv 12:1-5)

85. Are eunuchs and virgins superior to fathers and mothers because Jesus said: "There be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake" (Mt 19:10-12), and the Bible says: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman"? (1 Cor 7:1)

86. Should not women be cheerful because they have never contributed a line to the male chauvinistic Bible? Can a freedom loving woman tolerate the following words against her: As the Church is a subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing (Eph 5:24). Thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee (Gn 3:18). A husband may divorce his wife, if she displeases him (Dt 24:1), but a wife cannot divorce her husband. We can then draw the conclusion that women must be submissive to their husbands at all times (Col 3:18), and they may be captured, violated, and then turned out of doors. (Dt 21:10-14)

87. Is not the position of woman in the Bible always at the bottom? Is she not created as an afterthought, a necessary evil, the anticlimax in the creation of God? Is she not treated as a slave to man, because "in sin did my mother conceive me"? (Ps 51:5)

God's Favourite Characters

88. Can you deny the fact that Moses ordered innocent women and children to be killed (Nu 13:17-18) and when

Israel took all these cities of Amorites at Heshbon he summed up the slaughter: We... utterly destroyed the men and the women and the little ones (Nu 21:25; Dt 2:34) and to take all the heads of the 24,000 Israelities who co-habited with Moabite women and worshipped Baal and command to hang them up before the Lord against the sun (Nu 25:4,9)? He did kill all the sons and subjects of Og by the order of God. (Nu 21:34-35)

89. Is not it a fact that Israelites looted a town and brought back women and children and Moses made them kill all women and children, except virgins, whom the men might keep for their pleasure ? (Nu 31:10,17-18)

90. Is it not strange that the Omniscient God called Noah a perfect man (Gn 6:9) without knowing that one day, under the influence of wine, he would stand naked before his son, forgetting the minimum standard of decency ?

91. Can we keep Lot as our ideal who, although was blessed by God, did not hesitate to sacrifice his own daughters to the mob. (Gn 19:8)

92. After reading the story of Jephthah and his daughter can there be any father who can be cruel enough to sacrifice his daughter to God. What would you think of a God who would receive such a sacrifice ?

93. Is it not a fact that Abraham, God's favourite, debauches his maid servant (Gn 16:4) and turns her child into the wilderness ? (Gn 21:14:15)

94. Is it not a fact that Jacob cheated his brother (Gn. 27:19), and Joshua was a butcher, who massacred many people ? (Jos 6;10;11)

95. Is not it a fact that Joshua brought the five kings of the Amorites being shut in a cave and then asked his fellow Israelites : Come near: put your feet upon the necks of these kings. Thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies. He then slew all five and hanged their bodies (Jos 10:16-26). He also hanged all the people of Makkedah and their king (Jos

10:28), and all the people of Libnah who were delivered to him by God (Jos 10:29-30). Did he not do everything in the name of God?

96. Who should be my ideal: Moses, Peter or Paul?

Moses, who struck down an Egyptian and escaped to the Midianites and when he was in the height of power, killed the people of that same tribe alongwith the children and defenseless women, be my ideal?

Paul, who in the beginning did not hesitate to preside over the stoning of a saint and dragged a whole family and threw them to prison for their Christian belief, but later when appointed to preach the gentiles, cursed people and struck them blind, if they denied to accept Christianity, be my ideal?

Peter, a greedy man, once who lopped off Malchus' ear and denied Jesus not once but three times be my ideal and an ideal man for mankind?

Wicked and Cruel Ideas

97. Is not it a wonderful dowry for King Saul who asked only a hundred foreskins of Philistines in return for the hand of his daughter Michal (I Sam 18:25,27)? But David cut off two hundred so that they may be used as necklace for the bride.

98. What could have initiated God to introduce the obscene and wicked rites of circumcision? Did he wish that both obscenity and rituals be intimately connected? (Gn 17:10-14, 23-27; Lev 12:3)

99. Is it not a fact that Joshua held out his spear at arm's length until the men of Ai, and the women and children --12,000 in all -- were killed with the edge of the sword, and an altar was built in the name of God to celebrate the victory (Jos 8:1-30)? It seems he competed with Moses in the killing spree when he massacred all the citizens of Jericho for a prostitute and her family. (Jos 6)

100. Is not it a fact that Elijah murders several hundred with heavenly fire just to show off his power? (1 Ki 1:9)

101. David was God's favorite, who brought out the people... and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. Even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon (1 Ch 20:3), tortures prisoners in a brick kiln (2 Sa 12:31), kills two-thirds of the Moabitish prisoners and hamstringed the captured horses (2 Sa 8:2,6), lives by massacre and robbery (1 Sa 27: 8-5), blackmails (1 Sa 25:8), maintains a harem (2 Sa 5:13); murders Uriah and takes his wife (2 Sa 11) and at last died demanding the blood of two men. (1 Ki 2:5-9)

102. Is it not ridiculous to think about David who killed 200 Philistines only to obtain their foreskins with which he could purchase Saul's daughter as his wife ? (1 Sa 18:27)

103. Is it not humiliating to think of Jehu, whom God had chosen to succeed Ahab to the throne, who killed 70 children of the king of Ahab and put a basketful of heads at the gate of the city ? (2 Ki 9:8; 10:1-11)

Fable of Fables

104. Could there not have been a hidden spring in the rock struck by Moses ?

105. Can you give the chemical equation of the reaction which took place when Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt ?

106. The length of the ark of Noah was three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits (Gn 6:15). It accommodated seven pairs of all clean animals and a pair of the animals that were not clean and seven pairs of the birds of the air (Gn 7:2-3). How could an ark of the given the measurement contain all that is said to be in it?

107. If the water prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep during the great flood (Gn 7:20) and destroyed the whole of mankind of the whole world, where did the water go after the flood?

108. When the children of Israel were crossing the Red Sea, how long did it take them to cross ? How wide was the

sea at that point? How many people were in the group? I doubt that three million Jews could have crossed 20 to 30 miles all in one day. There must be women, children, sick and the old. They would have been fed and clothed and the sick nursed. What is the need of crossing the Red Sea by Moses and the Jews when the dry land was there for them where the Suez Canal now exists?

109. Is it not a fact that the story of the stopping of the sun to enable Joshua to kill his enemy brought to the Bible from Homer's Odyssey, where the setting of the sun was delayed for Ulysses?

110. Is it not hard to believe many of the incidents that happened during the Exodus such as the falling of the huge walls of the city of Jericho at the sound of Joshua's trumpet?

Out-dated Laws

111. Is it not a fact that tithing was only connected to the Mosaic economy and is irrelevant in the present context? Should we accept it today?

112. Can you be a good citizen if you accept unquestioning obedience to rulers like Hitler? (Rom 13: 1-2; 1 Pet 2: 13-14)

113. Can we accept slavery because it is a God-established institution (Lv 25:44-6; Ex 21:2-6) and join His slave-capturing expeditions (Dt 20: 10-15)? One can sell his daughters (Ex 21:7) because New Testament never says no to slavery? (1 Tim 6:1; Tit 2:9; Eph 6:5; 1 Pet 2:18)

114. Is it not a fact that Abraham and other Jews mentioned in the Bible had many slaves, both men and women, who could be bought and sold at the will of their masters or handed down to the master's heirs because slaves were their property (Ex 21:21)? Did Jesus ever condemn slavery through his parables?

115. Is it not a fact that Noah had planted a vineyard and drank the wine and was so much drunk that he forgot

that he should not be naked before his sons? Should one forget that the *Proverbs* forbid the use of liquor (23:29-35) and Isaiah suggests us "Woe unto those who drink wine and mix strong drinks" (5:22).

116. Is it not very cruel to beat children with rods? (Pr 23:14)

Human Sacrifice

117. When God commands Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac (Gn 22:2) does it not suggest that God requires human sacrifice? (Lev 27:28-29; Jos 6:17; Je 7:30-31; Ezk 20:26; Mi 6:7)

118. Is it not with the demand of God, that Jephthah burnt his daughter (Jdg 11:22-35), and David sacrificed the sons of Saul to prevent a famine (2 Sa 21:1-14)? Does it not directly encourage cannibalism? (Je 19:9; Dt 28:53; La 4:10; 2 Ki 6:28-29)

119. Can Christians satisfy God through flower, fruit and roots who demands instead human and animal sacrifice? The unpredictable swift-to-anger God of the Holy Bible once ordered the unquestioning altar-slaying of Isaac by his father. Even he did not relent the child sacrifice by Jephthah. The seven sons of Saul were hanged to appease the Lord. (2 Sa 21:1-9) Can Mosaic Law be an exception when it is written clearly: "Notwithstanding devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the Lord of all that he has both of man and beast... shall be redeemed but shall surely be put to death" (Lev 27:28,29). It continued even during the period of Paul who clearly demanded that bodies be living sacrifices to God. (Rom 12:1)

Jewish Rituals

120. Can we deny the fact that there was extensive bull worship among the people of the Old Testament? Was not the "Bull El" the golden calf made by Aaron (Ex 32) and Jeroboam (1 Kg 12), and did Zedekiah impersonate his God by making an iron-horned bull? (1 Kg 22)

121. No missionary would laugh at the heathen-Hindu rituals and would not be proud anymore after reading the rituals prescribed by their God and the recipes He ordered to be prepared for Aaron and his sons: You shall take the other ram; and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands upon the head of the ram, and you shall kill the ram, and take part of its blood and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron and upon the tips of the right ears of his sons, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet, and throw the rest of the blood against the altar round about. Then you shall take part of the blood that is on the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it upon Aaron and his garments, and upon his sons and his sons' garments with him; and he and his garments shall be holy, and his sons and his sons' garments with him. You shall also take the fat of the ram, and the fat tail, and the fat that covers the entrails, and the appendage of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them and the right thigh (for it is a ram of ordination), and one loaf of bread, and one cake of bread with oil, and one wafer, out of the basket of unleavened bread that is before the LORD; and you shall put all these in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD. Then you shall take them from their hands, and burn them on the altar in addition to the burnt offering, as a pleasing odour before the LORD; it is an offering by fire to the LORD. (Ex 29:19-25)

122. Can we imagine the Great God who simply wasted forty days and nights furnishing Moses with plans and specifications for a tabernacle, an ark, a mercy seat and two cherubs of gold, a table, four rings, some dishes and spoons, one candlestick, three bowls, seven lamps, a pair of tongs, some snuff dishes (for all of which God had patterns), ten curtains with fifty loops, a roof for the tabernacle of rams' skins dyed red, a lot of boards, an altar with horns, ash pans, basins, and flesh hooks, and fillets of silver and pins of brass; that he told Moses to speak unto all the wise hearted

that he had filled with wisdom, that they might make a suit of clothes for Aaron, and that God actually gave directions that an ephod shall have the two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof, and gave all the orders concerning mitres, girdles, and onyx stones, ouches, emeralds, breastplates, chains, rings, Urim and Thummim, and the hole in the top of the ephod like the hole of a habergeon? (Ex 27; 28)

123. With reference to Daniel, I wonder since how long had the Jews been offering the daily sacrifice and what stopped them from doing so? (12:11)

Enemy of the Open Society

124. The Christians claim that they love their enemies and that love will solve all the problems of the world. I do not think so. It is like trying to wash the Empire State Building with a bar soap. The Christian penal code is so barbarous that it has least love for liberty and tolerance for the people of other religions. A father must slay his own daughter, wife, son or friend, for a difference of religion (Dt 13:6-10). Elijah slays 450 priests for differing with him in religion (1 Ki 18:40). Death for heresy (Ex 22:20) was permitted. Even the New Testament unhesitatingly says: "Those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!" (Gal 5:12) These "divine" words encouraged Torquemada to establish Inquisition in Spain.

Be Aware of Wrong Bible

125. Is it not a fact that the Hebrew word "Elohim" is employed with a plural verb because the singular verb "El" was also in existence? If Elohim is plural, is it wrong to translate the first sentence: "In the beginning God" as "In the beginning the Gods" because at the time of creation Jesus was not present? Is not "Go, serve other Gods" (1 Sa 26:19) a correct translation of *Elohim*? Why do they deny the first line of the Bible and hate other gods?

126. We are told by God in Genesis: "Let us go down, and there con-fuse their language" (11:7). The New English

Bible uses the word "confuse", though "God is not the author of Confusion." (1 Cor 14:33)

127. Is it not a fact that the dogma of eternal punishment comes from a wrong translation of the Hebrew word "Lasting"? Atrocious Christians translated "lasting" as "ever lasting."

128. In Revelation 22:14, the RSV says: "Blessed are those who wash their robes." But the KJV says "Blessed are they that do his commandments." Also the RSV does not call Mary a virgin. Don't you think the translators misguided the Bible readers?

129. Should we read "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him" (Job 13:15) or "He will slay me; I have no hope"? Is "I know that my redeemer liveth" (Job 19:25) correct or "I know that my avenger liveth"?

130. Is it a proper translation of *virgin* when Matthew (1:22-23) quotes Isaiah (7:14)? Virgin in Isaiah as *alma*, in the feminine form means a "young woman." The term is also found in Proverbs (30) where it indicates a *young woman* who has been married?

131. Should it be "Joseph and his mother marvelled" (Lk 2:33) or "his father and his mother marvelled." The Protestants, translated "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 3:2). But the Catholics read it: "Do penance..." Sorry, we are misguided by the translators who instead of translating the Holy Bible misinterpreted it for the sake of their God to save Him from other gods of the world.



MISTAKES OF MOSES

The leading biologists of the day deny the Genesis record of creation and propound the Organic evolution of man. The modern scholarship allows us to believe that the biblical account in its historical claims lead us next to nothing. Much to the embarrassment of the missionaries is : "If Adam and Eve were not historical persons, then Paul was wrong and Jesus mistaken. And if Jesus and the Bible writers were wrong when they treated Genesis as history, then there is no reason to regard them as right in any other statements they made." I do not know how to interpret God's words and justify His six-day-creation and His world-wide Flood. I have my sincere doubts to share with you. Can you help :

Disturbing the Eternity

132. What do you mean by the word "beginning" ? Why did God think it the best time to create ? What was God doing before creating the world ? If He had been doing nothing, what made Him give up His state of slothfulness and begin the work of creation ?

133. Is it possible to presuppose a time when nothing existed except a God who existed in vacuo doing nothing ? There was neither matter nor mind, neither sound nor seeing but from an eternal sleep God spoke to Himself to create everything for his sports.

134. Is it for the first time that God created the world or how many times has He created this world before ? Which equinox was it when the earth was placed into orbit ? Spinoza has rightly remarked that if God created the world for an object, He desires something He lacks, which denies His infinite power.

135. Out of what material cause did God create this Universe? As we know God being indestructible, immutable and indivisible He cannot create anything out of Himself.

136. For what purpose did God create this universe and for whom did he create it, when he alone was in existence. Being perfect He needed nothing for Himself?

Creation Out of Nothing

137. The earth hangs upon nothing (Job. 26:7) or has the earth pillars and foundation? (1 Sa 2:8; Ps 104:5)

138. If the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the water (Gen 1:2), where was water?

139. If God created heaven and earth at the same time (Gn 1:1) where did He keep Satan who had already fallen from grace and was present in the garden of Eden as a serpent before Adam and Eve arrived?

140. Is it not a fact that while all the six days of creation, no mention is made of a bottomless pit and the serpent till Adam and Eve were created? Are they pre-creation or in the conception of the creator?

141. When God said: "Let there be light" (Gen 1:14) who heard and carried out the order, when except God nobody was present (Is 45:6)? If God was pleased to see the light had He never seen the light before? Is it a fact that He was in darkness since all eternity? (Is 45:7, 18)

142. If light, the sun, moon and stars were not created until the fourth day (Gn 1:3, 16) how did God count three days without the presence of a sun and separated light from darkness?

143. If on the third day God created vegetation, how did vegetation grow without sunlight?

Mud-man and the Rib-woman

144. If Adam was made out of mud and Eve from Adam's rib, what did God make this Universe from? If it is made out of his voice, there is the existence of two things from the beginning, one is God and another his voice. The Bible says God created everything out of nothing. Is it possible to create anything out of nothing? Nothing comes out of nothing something out of something. Can you repudiate the fact that creation was formed slowly from a mass of molten matter? I think, with God, all things are possible even a creation out of nothing.

145. Were the trees brought forth before man was created (Gn 1:11-12) or after man was formed (Gn 2:7-9)? Man was made after the beasts (Gn 1:25-26) or before the beasts (Gn 2:18-20)? Which was first, Adam or Atom? If Adam was the first human being, how long ago was he created?

Six-days' Creation

146. Can we hold that the earth, that is 5000 years old, was made in six days only of twenty-four hours each? Does not the Hebrew word "Yom" used in its singular form signifying "a day of twenty-four hours" according to the Mosaic account? If God is Omnipotent how did He take six days to bring the Universe into being and then had to rest after His labour? Has it not been proved that the process of creation took millions of years?

147. Can we interpret the six days as six thousand years or six Periods or Ages? We cannot ignore the fact that there are two contradictory accounts of creation given in the first two chapters of Genesis. Does not the second account state that man was created out of dust on the third day and woman on the sixth day? If these days are Ages or Periods, we have to admit that Adam existed millions of years before Eve? How do you interpret the Sabbath? Are we ready to admit that God rested for millions of years after the creation?

148. What colour was Adam's skin ? If our first parents were white, how did the black races originate and vice versa ? What language did Adam and Eve speak ? If we have all descended from Adam and Eve, why is there essential racial differences, diverse languages and dispersion to isolated places ? Even the different blood groups is a good reason to believe that there were more than one origin of man ?

Rise of Man

149. It is said that God created Adam in his own image. If Adam was like God how did he miss all the good qualities of God and was deceived by Satan ? And again, if he was made out of dust, should we suppose that God is also a Being of dust ?

150. It is said that Adam and Eve hid themselves from God, having eaten from the forbidden tree. Is there a place where man can hide from God ? David rightly says in *Psalms*: "Where can I go from your spirit ? Or where can I flee from your presence ?" (139:7)

151. Why did God tell a lie to Adam that when he would eat the fruit of knowledge he would die the same day (Gn 2:17) ? Whereas we know that Adam lived for 930 years (Gn 5:5). Should we interpret *Genesis* literally or allegorically ?

152. Has Satan rightly said to Adam and Eve that they would "be Gods" if they eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil ? Is it a sin to eat the fruit of knowledge ? If it was a sin yesterday it should be treated a sin today as well. Should not the Bible-lovers -- the Christians close down all their educational centres and libraries to obey God's words ? Does not human history show that the eating of the fruit of the tree of good and evil was not the cause of man's downfall but the beginning of man's ascent from the mire of ignorance ?

Contradictions in Creation

153. Why are there two contradictory stories of creation in the *Genesis* ? When the first chapter asserts that God

created man, both male and female the second chapter tells that God created Adam first?

154. In *Genesis* (1:3) God said: 'Let there be light and there was light.' But in *Genesis* (1:14) God again said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens." Did God not already create light in verse 3?

155. In *Genesis* (2:18) God wishes : " It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." This is contrary to what the apostle Paul recommends: Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife." (1 Cor 7:27)

156. Noah was five hundred years old when he begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Gn 5:32). But in another place Moses contradicts himself when he says that Shem was one hundred years old and begot Arphaxad two years after the Flood (Gn 11:10). That means the Flood took place when Noah was six hundred years old. (Gn 7:11)

Unknown Wife of Cain

157. Poor Adam who lost his rib for his wife had two children, Cain and Abel, that too without marriage. We donot know how old were Adam and Eve when Cain and Abel were born. The male chauvinist God does not bother to record the daughters of Adam and Eve. Cain's wife gave birth to a son, but we know nothing about Cain's wife and who the people were that Cain was afraid of in the land of Nod? Should not we think that Cain and Seth married the daughters of their father or did Eve who,as their mother was the only woman at the time of Cain's departure, follow him to become his wife?

158. Would not it be more nice for God to create two separate couples to prevent mankind from incest or should we believe that Cain married a female of a pre-existent lower animal species? Had the Biblical God no objection to this arrangement as was seen in the story of Lot and his two daughters?

159. Cain became a farmer and his brother Abel a shepherd. Why was God pleased with Abel and his offering and rejected Cain's? Was it because He had a passion for fatty meat? (Lv 8:14-21)

160. When Cain killed his brother Abel did God do anything to save Abel, His favourite worshipper? When Christ was crucified did He grant his prayer? What guarantee is there that He will listen to our prayers and save us?

Three Ten Commandments

161. Is it not a fact that there are three self contradictory Ten Commandments in the Bible? (Ex 20; Ex 34; Dt 5)

162. Did not God the Law Giver become a Law Breaker when He gave orders to steal (Ex 3:21-22), kill (Ex 32:27), commit adultery (Ho 1:2) and incite the Jews to appropriate the property of their neighbors? (Dt 20:10-17)

In Search of Noah's Ark

163. Can we deny the fact that the story of the Flood and Noah's ark were based upon some earlier stories but not facts?

164. Did the flood really happen? If it happened, was it a world wide flood? Was it possible for an ark to be built which would hold at best two of all land-dwelling species? Can one imagine where this ark landed after the flood?

165. Is the ark of Noah a fable? Can a kind and good God drown the animals who are harmless and allow the snakes, which caused mankind's fall, into the ark before the flood?

166. Is it not a fact that the generation of the sons of Noah (Gn 10) include Gomer, personification of a country; and Madai, the Hebrew name for Mizraim, which were wrongly listed as the son of Ham and grandson of Noah.



THE JEALOUS GOD

If there is a God, He cannot be more than one and cannot be a God of Mystery and Miracles, rather a God of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. The Holy Bible attributes various words, images and mystical metaphors to God such as Wisdom, Love, Power, Faith, Grace, Hope, Knowledge, Nature, Force, Charity, Mind, Health and Truth etc. The Biblical God Yahweh however, has no such qualities to be attributed.

If truth is everything and if John is correct to say that the truth shall make us free (8:32), then the greatest truth about God is that He is not fit to be called the God of the Universe. S.G.F. Brandon rightly remarked : "Yahweh, an ancient desert god, came to be regarded not only as the national god, but also as the one and the only God of the universe." (*The Judgement of the Dead*. New York : Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967:56)

God of the Bible is not at all free from His tribal characteristics. In course of time the uncivilized Yahweh became the Lord of the Universe when Jews became civilized. They refined their God too. If there is a God He should be Self-existent, Conscious, All Betitude, Formless, Almighty, Just, Merciful, Unbegotten, Infinite, Unchangeable, Beginningless, Incomparable, Lord of All, All Pervading, Omniscient, Controller of all from within, Imperishable, Fearless, Eternal, Holy and Creator of the Universe.

The God of the Holy Bible, though wonderful and infinite in power and wisdom, conveyed to Moses first from the

burning bush (Ex 3:11-15) and appeared to His chosen people. He told Moses that He is the God of his fathers which means the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob (Ex 3:15). The advent of God described in the Bible is dramatic in its language and expression. He came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran... He had horns coming out of his hand... Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet (Hab 3:3-6). There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; coals were kindled by it... And He rode upon a cherub, and did fly; and He was seen upon the wings of the wind. (2 Sam 22:9-11)

To attract the Israelites, God performed many miracles, even opened the sea for a path, led them by cloud and fire and killed their enemies. At times He sends them flood and plagues, earthquakes and pestilence. When He failed to convince His chosen people that He is their only God, He sells them to the king of Mesopotamia for eight years, because the Israelites intermarried with gentiles and worshipped idols (Jdg 3:8). He "smites" Israel and delivers the Jews to the Moabite kings for 18 years (Jdg 3:14). He sells the Jews to the king of Canaan for 20 years (Jdg 4:2). He delivers the Jews to the Midianites for seven years (Jdg 6:1). He allows Jerusalem and Judah to fall into the hands of the Philistines for 40 years and to be under the rule of Babylonia for 70 years. (Jdg 13:1)

How God behaves with his chosen people and with the gentiles can be seen throughout the Holy Bible. I have selected a list of references for our readers to imagine a God who is infinite in mercy and love. He is described according to Amos : One who stands on a wall with a plumbline (7:7). Job tells us that He "runs like a giant." (16:14) He "roars like a lion" (Ho 11:10); curses (Gn 8:21); hisses (Is 5:26) spues (Rev 3:16); changes His mind (Ex 32:14); sends scabs (Dt 28:27);

is tailor and clothier (Gn 3:21); shows his "back parts" (Ex 33:23); chats with the Devil (Jb 1:7-8); delivers a man into the Devil's power (Jb 2:6); charges his angels with folly (Jb 4:18); takes no pleasure in men's legs (Ps 147:10); causes adultery (2 Sa 12:11); causes suicide (Je 19:7); causes indecency (Is 20:4); instructs Samuel to lie. (1 Sa 16:2)

God creates evil (Is 14:7); holds the balance of deceit in his hands and loves to oppress (Ho 12:7); He has troubles in His bowels and his heart makes a noise (Je 4:19); His breath causes frost; His breath also kindles coals. (Jb 37:10)

God is a baker (Ex 16:4); works with His fingers (Ps 8:3); considers some men to be a smoke in the nose (Is 65:5); rewards transgressors (Pr 26:10); rewards fools (Pr 26:10); orders men to drink, be drunken and spue (Je 25:27); takes away nose jewels (Is 3:21); visits the earth and inspects buildings (Gn 11:5); is weary with repenting (Je 15:6); spreads dung on men's faces (Mal 2:3); is "a bear lying in wait and as a lion in secret places" (La 3:10); carnivorous (Ho 13:8) and has a keen scent for roast meat. (Gn 8:20-21)

God deceives his own prophets (Je 20:7); sought to kill his own emissary (Ex 4:24); smites men with emerods (1 Sa 5:8-9); sanctions slavery (Ex 21:2-6); orders slave-capturing expeditions (Dt 20:10-15); orders the slaughter of men, women and children (1 Sa 15:3); sanctions the violation of virgins (Nu 31:18); and sends people a delusion to entrap them into damnation. (2 Thes 2:11-12)

In his famous book *The Case against Religion*, James Hervey Johnson rightly remarks that the God of the Bible is: "Murderous, vicious, treacherous, cruel, deceitful and arrogant. No man of ordinary good morals could be even a fraction as vicious, murderous, or vengeful as the Christian God, according to the book reputed to be His divine revelation." (San Diego: *The Truth Seeker*. 1980:58)

God Among Gods

167. Can God be called the God of the Universe, when He himself says in His Ten Commandments: "I am Jehovah, the only God," but "I am Jehovah your God who liberated you from your slavery in Egypt" (Ex 20:2), and in the Second Commandment He did not say that there were no other Gods, but said that the Israelites, "may worship no other god than me." Again He says to the Jews: "For you must worship no other gods, but only Jehovah: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (Ex 34:14). In *Psalms* He cursed that those choosing other gods shall all be filled with sorrow; He will not... even speak the names of their gods" (16:4). So the Jews must not worship any other god" (81:9), because He is "the God of Israel."

168. Are we not confused to conceive a single concept of God in the whole Bible when Israelites claim Yahweh as their God and not the God of other people? So in *Exodus* Yahweh reportedly threatens "to pass through the land of Egypt tonight and execute judgment upon all the gods of Egypt" (12:12). Likewise, the prophet Zephaniah proclaimed God's intent to starve out all those gods of foreign powers so that everyone shall worship the Almighty, God of Israel (Zeph 2:11). Nowhere were those gods referred to as not being real, rather the God of the Jews wished to punish the people who worship them. He recognises that like Him there are other gods. The Psalmist wrote that you the Lord are far greater than these other gods" (97:9). In another place the Psalmist admits: "God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgement"(82). In spite of that can we deny the fact that the Hebrew word for God "Elohim" means "gods"?

Image of God

169. In Genesis (1:2) it is written that the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. Whether there is a

shape of the Spirit or is the Spirit shapeless? If there is a shape of the Spirit what is the content of the shape? If God is shapeless how to distinguish His left hand from His right?

170. Jesus said that no man has seen God at any time (Jn 1:18; 6:46), because God is essentially a spirit (Jn 4:24). God Himself once said: "Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live" (Ex 33:20). But in *Genesis* the terms "selem" or image and "demut" or resemblance, is used by God to say: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (1:26) If God created man in His own image how can God be without image? If He has an image how can He remain a Pure Spirit?

171. If we go back to the period of *Genesis* we read how God was playing hide and seek with Adam and played peek-a-boo with Moses on mount Sinai and told him: "And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen" (Ex 33:23) and gave Moses a frontal view several times: "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (Dt 34:10). Again "The Lord spake unto Moses face to face" (Ex 33:11). "The sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire" (Ex 24:17). Even after his wrestling match with God, Jacob declared: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (Gn 32:30). David is quoted: "I foresaw the Lord always before my face" (Acts 2:25). When God appeared to Moses and Aaron and 70 Jewish elders: "They saw the God of Israel and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness" (Ex 24:10). If God is shapeless how do we perceive His image, His back parts, His face, etc?

172. Can God as a person be seen as Moses did, or can one wrestle with Him as Jacob did? How tall is He? If

He walked in the Garden looking for Adam, does He have legs ? Did He really confound the languages of man so we could not keep his company in heaven ? Did He actually admit He could not destroy the iron chariots of the people of the plain ? Did His fingers literally write on the tablets Moses brought down from his interview ? Did He really compress Himself into the man Jesus, thus converting spirit into flesh ?

Limitations of God

173. How could any man walk with God when God fills all space and sits in all space like a gouty old man in his armchair ?

174. Is God complete or incomplete ? If He is complete then what deficiencies He had which He wanted to fulfil by this creation ?

175. Is God male or female ? If he is a male He is an anthropomorphic male. If He is both male and female as He said (Gn 1:26-27) He can be called a hermaphrodite.

176. Why did God stop talking and visiting the world ? Is he afraid of mankind or the devil ?

177. Is God Omnipresent and can see and know all things (Jb 34:21-22) or He cannot see or know anything ? (Gn 3:8;11:5;18:20)

178. If God's eyes are everywhere (Pr.15:3) and upon every action of man (Jb 34:21) then how could Adam and Eve hid themselves from God's eyes amongst the trees of the garden and God was unable to see them (Gn 3:8)? When the Tower of Babel was built how could God not know what was going on ? (Gn 6:5)

179. God repented after the creation (Gn 6:6). He did not know that His mind-born child Satan would spoil his creation. Is there any gurantee or assurance that God won't repent any more ? It is said in the *Samuel*: "The strength of Israel will not... repent" (I Sa 15:29). How would you reconcile

this with verses 10 and 11 of the same chapter, where the Lord is seen repenting because He had let Saul be the king ?

180. If God lacks nothing, why should He demand prayer, sacrifice and offering from mere men ? Is He in anyway benefited by creating "Yes-men" ? "No-men" have no place for Him in heaven or on earth. Is He the God of His psychopaths ?

181. Love has no place for fear and fear cannot take the place of love. We cannot love anyone heartily out of fear. Fear is the most unpleasant emotion among all passions. Fear and Love cannot go together. Does it not sound absurd to tell man to fear God and love Him at the same time ? We cannot love God if God does not love us. No one can love a God frightens and tortures. Can we love a God who creates Hell and Satan ?

Ten Commandments

182. Do the Ten Commandments of God have any social and ethical relevance or they speak of God's childish, superficial, arbitrary, dogmatic, ambiguous code of behaviour towards mankind ? In the First Commandment God said: "You shall have no other Gods before Me." Does it not suggest that there are other religions and their Gods should not be allowed to exist ?

183. The Second Commandment reveals: "You shall not make yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a Jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments." This confuses the Catholics and the Protestants alike. The Catholics, closing their eyes to

this commandment, put religious art and statues in their Churches and bow their heads publicly whereas Protestants forbid only representational art.

184. The third Commandment tells: "You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain." How about a pastor or a clegyman who repeats God's name for every silly matter where it is not necessary ?

185. One is amused the way God advertised for a liar who acted as His messenger (2 Ch 18:19-22). He confused mankind with His thrice given Ten Commandments (Ex 20; 34; Dt 5). He contradicts and breaks it by His order to steal (Ex 3:21-22), kill (Ex 32:27) and commit adultery (Ho 1:2). If a law-giver becomes a law-breaker then who will obey the law ?

Whimsical God

186. We are forced to conclude that the biblical God is a father who is more concerned regarding his apples than his children. He boasted that He gave the Jews a land for which they did not labour, cities which they did not build, and allowed them to eat of oliveyards and vineyards which they did not plant (Jos 24:13). He destroyed the unity of language at the Tower of Babel to confuse mankind. He talked to Abraham as one man talks to another. Even He gave him the land and ordered him to murder his own son. He blessed Jacob, who robbed his brother Esau, and lied his father. He hardened Pharaoh's heart and then punished him for not letting the Jews go. He gave a recipe for hair-oil for Aaron's beard. He is so whimsical that He tells one thing in 2 Samuel (24:1) and contradicts the same thing in 1 Chronicle (21:1). If He is merciful and gracious (Ex 34:6) why did He seek to kill Moses (Ex 4:24) who was a good man ? It shows that Jehovah of the Old Testament was a tribal God of the barbaric Midianies,

whom the Jews adopted and made their own. He creates hell for his unbelievers and can roast them anytime for his pleasure.

187. Is it not Joshua's hallucination who thought that God wanted the Hebrews to have the land of Palestine, and that God told him to kill off every man, woman and child?

188. On what basis did God bless Jacob in preference to others when he had deceived his own father, brother, father-in-law and others?

189. Is God justified in sending famine which forced His chosen people to eat their own children? (2 Ki 2:24)

190. How great is a God who wipes out thousands of Egyptians in the Red Sea (Ex 14:1; 14:30) and wipes out the first born of every family in Egypt (Ex 12:29) only to show off his power and glory?

191. Can we think of a God who cursed the children for a simple fault (2 Ki 5:27), smote a king with leprosy because he tried to burn incense (2 Ch 26:19) and killed fifty thousand men for looking into a box? (1 Sa 6:19)

192. Revenge on a would-be-murderer of Cain shall be taken seven-fold (Gn 4:15). How can revenge be taken seven fold unless that soul is born and reborn to be slain seven times? (Jn 4:49; Pt 20:11; Ec 9:10)

Manufacturer of Hair-Oil

193. God is a great manufacturer of ointment, hair oil and perfume. He is proud enough to tell it to Moses and makes it a crime punishable with death for duplicating His goods. Can we imagine a God killing a man for imitating his ointment? (Ex 30:33)

God of intolerance

194. Can a merciful God command the Levite tribe : "Take every man his sword by his side and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp and slay every man

his brother and every man his companion and every man his neighbor" (Ex 32:27) for which 3,000 Israelites were massacred? Should they be killed only for worshipping the golden calf?

195. Can God be gracious when He ordered Moses to vex the Midianites and smite them only because they worshipped idols (Nu 25:16-17; 31:7-8)? Did He not order to invade Canaan and wipe out idolatry and wanted all gentiles to be annihilated by giving the order: "Thou shalt utterly destroy them"? (Dt 20:17)

196. Is it not an example of intolerance for the king Pekah of Israel who mercilessly massacred 120,000 Judeans because they had forsaken the Lord God? He did not even mind to make 200,000 women and children his slave. (2 Ch 28)

197. Is it necessary to kill all worshippers of Baal in Samaria and Israel by go guards at the direction of Jehu who were attending a Baal-worship service for the glorification of great God? (2 Ki 10:18-25)

198. Is it democratic to kill the follower of another religion? (Ex 22:20)

199. Can we believe a God who calls out two she-bears to mutilate or kill forty two children just because they called Elijah an old "bald head"? (2 Ki 2:23-24)

200. The Holy Bible says: "The truth shall make you free" (Jn 8:32). Which truth will make us free? The truth that "God is Love"? If He is Love how can He be cruel? All these abstract adjectives have been imposed on Him by His so called Prophets out of fear.

The Angry God

201. Think of a merciful God who met Moses at an inn and tried to kill him (Ex 4:24), turned all the ponds and pools and streams and all the rivers into blood (Ex 7:19), covered

the whole land of Egypt with frogs (Ex 8:16-17), destroyed the innocent cattle with painful diseases, covered man and beast with blains and boils (Ex 9:9), covered the magicians of Egypt with boils that they could not stand before Moses for the purpose of performing the same feat (Ex 9:11). Even He destroyed every beast and every man that was in the field and every herb and broke every tree with stork of hail and fire (Ex 9:25), sent locusts that devoured every tree that grew (Ex 10:15), destroyed all of the first born of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh upon the throne to the firstborn of the maidservant that set behind the mill (Ex 11:5), together with the firstborn of all beasts, so that there was not a house in which the dead were not (Ex 12:29-30). All this is done only for His beloved chosen people. Bible speaks of an Omnipotent (Lk 1:35) God who had the power to stop the sun and moon for the whole day (Jos 23:13) to give an opportunity to the Jews to destroy men and women and children by the million in the cruelest possible ways, but could not defeat an army that had iron chariots. (Jdg 1:19)

202. When God Himself tells: "I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercies" (Je 13:14) and is cruel enough to order: "Now go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling" (1 Sa 15:2-3), for which David questioned God when he saw the angel that smote the people: "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done?" (Isa 24:17)

The Great Dictator

203. Can God be called the God of mercy when He destroyed every living substance which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven: and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive alone with the seven survivors- (Gn 7:23)? He did not even allow the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah except Lot's family to survive with the

brimstone and fire from heaven (Gn 19:24). Is it not that God kills millions just for fun? (1 Sa 6:6)

204. Can a benevolent God strick dead 50,070 people of Bethshemesh, just because a few of them, who were working in a field, happened to glance into the Ark carrying the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments? The people lamented, because the Lord had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter. (1 Sa 6:19)

205. Can we think of a God who delivered the Philistines to Saul and Jonathan to kill them (1 Sa 14:12, 13,20),and asked Saul to kill all the Amalekites including the woman, infant and suking? (1 Sa 15:3,7)

206. Can God make some people sinners so that He can kill them for it? (1 Sa 2:25)

207. Is it a fact that God helped Sampson kill thirty men to pay off a minor debt? (Jdg 14:19)

208. Can we escape the fact that God makes Jephthah burn his only daughter in return for a favour? (Jdg 11:29)

God's Chosen Leader

209. Is it not a fact that loving a God is not enough if we donot love and accept Moses, the chief servent of God, to whom God promised-~~the~~ Promised Land?

210. Did not God kill the eleven rulers of Israel because they refused to invade the Promised Land after they had spied on it for 40 days? He was about to kill 250 Levite princes who challenged his leadership? Did He not repent when He proceeded to open up the earth and bury alive "the wives, sons, and little children" of two of the princes, and send a fire that consumed the remaining princes (Nu 16:1-40)? Were 14,700 Jews not killed in plague, because they rebelled against Moses for the killing of the 250 princes?

211. Did God not order the Jews for the Promised Land : "Cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the

Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them"? (Dt 7:1-2)

212. Can we think of a God who wants the other tribes to be slaughtered but does not allow them to make peace with the Israelites ? (Jos 11:19)

213. Can God be called an impartial God when He was partial to Abel for which Cain was driven to kill his brother in a fit of jealousy ? Similarly by supporting Jacob did God not deprive Esau from his birthright and parental blessing (Rom 9:13)? Should God interfere with the affairs of David and Nabal (1 Sa 25:38)? Yes, because God claims : "For I set all men every one against his neighbor." (Zc 8:10)

Racist Father and Racist Son

214. Did God not choose Abraham to be the father of the greatest nation on earth and changed Jacob's name to Israel in order to make Jacob's sons the founders of the 12 tribes of Israel (1 Ch 17:22)? Did God not tell Moses : "And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people" (Lev 26:12)? Did He not tell Ezekiel:"I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever" (Ez 43:7)? Is it not a fact that the Lord of the Universe is the God of the Jews, who with the request of the Jews, destroyed the Canaanites at Hormah ? (Nu 21:3)

215. Can we deny the fact that the only son of God inherited the racist idea from his Father and had contempt for the gentiles when he said : "Saith the Lord, the lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the ... Gentiles is on his way" (Je 4:7), and passed an order to his disciples: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles... but rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel" (Mt 10:5,6)? Even for the apostles it was difficult to let the Gentiles be grafted to the scheme of the Christian salvation. (Rom 11)

If His Kingdom Comes

216. In His Kingdom He will execute those who will worship other gods (Ex 22:20), human sacrifice will be in His state rituals (Lv 27:28-29), and citizens will be allowed to keep slaves and sell their daughters. (Ex 21:7)

217. All the hospitals, police station, military departments and fire station will be closed on the Sabbath day and one who works on that day will be killed. (Ex 31:15)

218. There will be no need for Mission Hospitals because diseases are not caused by virus but by demons. Dr. Jesus argues with the demons, diagnoses the patients and prescribes how to cast them out. This is the way through which mankind can be saved from all maladies. (Mt 7:22; 8:16; 8:28-33; 9:32; 10:1; 12:22-28; Mk 1:23-34; 3:11; 5:2-13; 9:17; 9:29; Lk 8:30; 11:24)

219. If there are Mission hospitals at all then transfusions would not be allowed (Lv 7:26-27) and use of anesthetia during childbirth and caesarean would be abolished. (Gn 3:16)

220. No medicine can cure leprosy and gonorrhea. It may be cured by sprinkling the blood of two turtledoves around the house, with proper incantations. (Lv 14:49; 15:11)

221. Any girl who is not a virgin and gets married would be stoned to death (Dt 22:20-21). All kind of welfare programmes would be stopped (2 Thess 3:10) and people will be forced to believe in *Jehovahjerri* or God provides. If the wisdom of this world is foolishness for God (1 Cor 3:19) are we not fools for Christ's sake (1 Cor 4:10)? So no Christians are allowed to go to school, college or University or run convents, and public schools as the Holy Bible says: Avoid all knowledge (Tim 6:20). Knowledge is sinful (1 Cor 8:2) because wisdom is equated with evil (Mt 10:16). Do not study the problem, pray and ask for divine guidance (Mt 10:19; Mk 13:11). We walk by faith, and not by sight. " (2 Cor 5:7)

222. Again if a Christian school is needed in His Kingdom, it will prescribe a syllabus where the school children

will be taught that the effect precedes the cause because God created light (Gn 1:3) before He created sun (Gn 1:16). In Botany they will be taught that plants grow without sunlight (Gn 1:16). In Astronomy the students would learn that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still. Moreover, they will learn that Faith can remove mountains, help one to digest poison (Mk 16:18) and cure a sick person through prayer. (Jas 5:14-15)

In such a state J.D. Bell rightly remarks: "We would be living in a world where no sane person would want to live!" (The American Rationalist:56)



CONFUSION WITHIN

Christians of the world believe strongly that the Bible had its origin in the mind of God, Who so kindly transmitted it to mankind through His prophets. Its impact and importance cannot be expressed through human language. In a reply to Rev. Robert Collyer, the great American orator Robert Green Ingersoll eloquently expressed :

It is a splendid book. It makes the noblest type of Catholics and the meanest bigots. Through this book men give their hearts for good to God, or for evil to the devil. The best argument for the intrinsic greatness of the book is that it can touch such wide extremes and seem to maintain us in the most unparalleled cruelty, as well as the most tender mercy; that it can inspire purity like that of the great saints and afford arguments in favour of polygamy. The Bible is the text book of ironclad Calvinism and sunny Universalism. It makes the Quaker quiet and the Millerite crazy. It inspired the Union soldier to live grandly and die for the right and Stonewall Jackson to live nobly, and die grandly for the wrong. (*The Works* VII : 112)

But I'm sorry to say that we have been confused very much by God since the time of Adam. Adam's fall is one of the reasons for God's confusion. In the whole of the Bible God Himself contradicts in His works and words.

If God is one and His scripture is one, His message cannot be many and contradictory. The simple and uneducated evangelists, without a careful reading of the scripture, declare

all parts of the Bible as equally inspired. They compare *Isaiah* as equal to the *Book of Ezekiel* and *Amos* with *Obadiah*. But the Prophets differ. Ezekiel cannot reach the height of Isaiah in spiritual attainment. Obadiah whose heart was so tarnished for the foreigners can never be compared with Amos and his preaching of universal justice. Can Haggai's petty religious ritual be compared to Hosea ?

Besides, there are at least 20,000 errors in the New Testament commonly read by Protestants and Catholics. But I'm shocked to tell, after a thorough research, that there are probably 50,000 serious discrepancies and inaccuracies in the whole of the Bible. (*Look*, Feb.26, 1952; *Awake*, Sept. 8, 1957:25)

These errors exists because it was written in different times by different authors belonging to different nations. If we claim it as the word of God then these mistakes are unpardonable. If we think, it is by a few authors of religious sentiment we cease to put it under *higher criticism*. Let us not be sandwiched between God and men, but examine a few contradictions for our error analysis :

God Versus God

223. If none can see God (Jn 1:18; 1 Tim 6:16) how has He been seen by many ? (Gn 26:2; Ex 24:9-10; 33:22-23; Am 9:1)

224. If none can see God's face (Ex 33:22) how could Jacob and Moses both see God face to face ? (Gn 32:30; Ex 33:11)

225. What to make of these two texts which speak of seeking the Lord : Second Chronicles (7:14) requires us to seek God's face, whereas Exodus (33:18-20) tells us that when Moses asked to see God's face, God answered: "Thou can not see my face." How are we to reconcile these two ?

226. If God speaks to a crowd from the sky as He spoke to Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses (Mk 9:7;1:11)

how can one say that no man has ever heard the voice of God ? (Jn 5:37)

227. Is God all-powerful (Gn 17:1; Je 32:17; 27; Mt 19:26; Mk 10:27; Rev 19:6) or not ? (Jdg 1:19)

228. Whether God dwells in light (1 Tim 6:16) or in darkness ? (1 Ki 8:12; Ps 18:11; 97:2)

229. If God does not tempt any man (Jas 1:13) why did He tempt Abraham ? (Gn 22:1)

230. If with God, all things are possible (Mt 19:26) how could He not drive out the inhabitants of the valley fearing the Chariots of iron ? (Jdg 1:19)

231. If God is the God of peace (Rom 15:33) why is He called a Man of War ? (Ex 15:3)

232. If fathers shall not suffer for sins of children, or the children for sins of fathers (Dt 24:16) why did God kill everyone in Sodom and Gomorrah, including the children ? (Gn 19:24)

233. If God will destroy the entire earth and every person on it (Zp 1:1) then who will remain to call Him nice ? (Zp 3:9)

234. If God tempts no one (Jas 1:13) how does He deliberately lead men astray so that He can show them mercy as Paul said ? (Rom 11:31)

God also Confuses

235. Does God not confuse people by forbidding them, in the beginning, to make idols (Ex 20:4) and later commanding the children of Israel to make two cherubim of gold ? (Ex 25:18)

236. Paul says, do not become "proud" of your faith, but stand in awe (Rom 11:20) and repentance for sin is better than prideful virtue (Lk 18:9), but in another place he repeatedly boasts of his faith, and says one should take pride in it ? (Rom 15:17; 2 Cor 1:12)

237. Should we hate this life and suffer eternally (Rom 8:18; Jn 12:25 ; Mk 8:34) or enjoy this life, for there is no other, when we are dead ? (Ec 9:9)

238. Paul says: "Do not presume to judge your brother" (Rom 14:10) but he himself proceeds to judge and give instructions for judging ? (1 Cor 5:3, 13; 6:1, 1 Tim 1:18; 5:20)

239. According to Isaiah (44:22) a person's sins are blotted out when he or she repents – "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." But in Acts (3:19, 20) we are given the impression that sins are blotted out just before the coming of Jesus. Which is right ?

Disorder in Genealogy

240. If David was the eighth son of Jesse (1 Sa 16:10-11) how was he referred to as the seventh son ? (1 Ch 2:13-15)

241. Whether Solomon was David's second son by Bathsheba (the first having died) (2 Sa 12:24) or the fourth son ? (1 Ch 3:5)

242. If Isaac was the only begotten son of Abraham (Heb 11:17) how is it that Abraham had many sons ? (Gn 16:15;25:1-2)

243. Michal the daughter of Saul had no child into the day of her death (2 Sa 6:23) or had five sons? (2 Sa 21:8)

244. Was Jesus the only begotten son of God (1 Jn 4:9) or did God have many sons like him ? (Gn 6:2; Jb 1:6)

245. According to the *Genesis* God said to Abraham: Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs and will serve them, and they will afflict them *four hundred years* (Gn 15:13). But in *Exodus* the same God differs when He says: "Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was *four hundred and thirty years*." Perhaps due to God's slip of tongue the word "thirty" was deleted from the first verse.

246. If Terah was seventy years old when he begot Abraham (Gn 11:26) and died when he was 205 (Gn 11:32) it follows that Abraham was 135 years old at the time of his father's death. Now if Abraham had left Haran when his father died, then he must have been 135 years old upon his arrival in the Promised Land. This contradicts the verse of *Genesis* 12:4, where it is said that Abraham was 75 when he left Haran.

Wrong Number

247. Whether David took seven hundred horsemen (2 Sa 8:4) or seven thousand horsemen from Hadadezer? (1 Ch 18:4)

248. Whether David slew seven hundred Syrian charioteers and forty thousand horsemen (2 Sa 10:18) or seven thousand charioteers and forty thousand footmen? (1 Ch 19:18)

249. Whether David paid 50 shekels of silver (2 Sa 24:24) or 600 shekels of gold for a threshing floor and some oxen?

250. Whether Solomon made a molten sea which contained only 2000 baths (1 Ki 7:23-26) or held 3000 baths? (2 Ch 4:2-5)

251. Whether the pillars of brass casted by Solomon for the Temple were 18 cubits high (1 Ki 7:15-21) or 35 cubits high?

252. Whether the officers who "bare rule" over the conscript workers numbered 550 (1 Ki 9:23) or only 250? (2 Ch 8:10)

253. Whether Baasha of Israel made war against Asa in that monarch's 36th year (2 Ch 16:1) or had Baasha died 10 years earlier? (1 Ki 16:6-8)

254. Was Ahaziah 22 years old when he ascended the throne being 18 years younger than his father (2 Ki 8:25-

26) or was he 42 years when he began his reign and was thus two years older than his father ? (2 Ch 22:12)

255. How many sons did Benjamin have; ten (Gn 46:21); three (1Ch 7:6) or five ? (1 Ch 8:42)

256. Whether the number of souls in the house of Jacob who entered Egypt was three score and ten (Gn 46:26-27) or three score and fifteen ? (Acts 7:14)

257. Whether Peter denied Christ thrice before the cock crowed (Mt 26:34; Lk 22:34) or the cock crowed after the first and second denials ? (Mk 14:66-72)

Who's Who

258. Whether Lot is Abraham's nephew (Gn 14:12) or his brother ? (Gn 14:14)

259. Whether Hobab is Moses' brother-in-law (Nu 10:29) or his father-in-law ? (Jdg 4:11)

260. Was Keturah Abraham's wife (Gn 25:1) or his concubine ? (1 Ch 1:32)

261. Zedekiah was Jehoiakin's uncle (2 Ki 24:17; 1 Ch 3:15-16) or his brother ? (2 Ch 36:9-10)

262. If Salah was the son of Arphaxed (Gn.11:12) how was he called the grandson of Arphaxad ? (Lk 3:35-36)

263. Was Joseph's father Hali (Mt 1:16) or Jacob ? (Lk 3:25)

To Be or Not To Be

264. Whether children are to be punished for the-sins of their parents (Ex 34:7; Isa 14:21) or not to be punished for the sins of their parents ? (Dt 24:16; Eik 18:20)

265. When Noah wanted to curse his son Ham, he cursed his grandson Canaan (Gn 9:20-27). Why did Canaan have to bear the punishment for his father's sin when *Deuteronomy* says that children are not to be punished for the sins of their parents. (24:16)

266. When circumcision is instituted as a ritual (Gn 17:10) is it alright for the non-Jewish Christians to ignore the custom? (Acts 15:5-11, Gal 2:3-5)

267. There seems to be a discrepancy between Daniel (6:10) and Mark (11:25) in regard to the accepted posture for praying. Should one stand or kneel in prayer?

268. Whether taking of oaths forbidden (Mt 5:34-37) or enjoined? (Nu 30:2; Gn 21:23, 24, 31; Ne 13:25; Is 65:16)

269. Is divorce restricted (Mt 5:32) or permitted? (Dt 24:1; 21:10:14)

270. Is poverty a blessing (Lk 6:20-24; Jas 2:5) or riches a blessing? (Jb 42:12; Pr 10:15)

Either Or

271. Whether Saul died by his own hand (1 Sa 21:4) or was killed by an Amalekite (2 Sa 1:5-10) or was he slain by the Philistines? (2 Sa 21:12)

272. Whether Josiah died in peace (2 Ki 22:20) or was he slain in the battle against the Egyptians? (2 Ki 23:29-30)

273. Whether Benjamin was born in Canaan (Gn 35:16-20) or Padan-Aram? (Gn 35:26)

Women Confused

274. It is said that sex is sin; however, it is better to marry than to be burnt (1 Cor 7:1,9). It is also said that it is better not to marry; neglect everything but save one's soul, for time is short before the Day of Judgement (1 Cor 7:25-40). Which one is to be accepted?

275. Should widows remarry (Gn 38:8-10, Deut 25:5-10) or should widows under sixty not be admitted to the church because they might try to remarry? (1 Tim 5:9-11)

276. I Corinthians (14:34) and I Timothy (2:11,12) forbid women to speak in the church whereas in I Corinthians (11:5) and Acts (21:9) it is permitted.

To Eat or Not To Eat

277. Every kind of animal is allowed for food (Gn 9:3) if so why did God prohibit certain kinds of animals ? (Dt 14:7-8; Le 11)

278. In the days of Moses the Bible speaks against the eating of swine. But in Acts (11:1-9) why is it said that anything in the meat line is good enough to eat ?

279. Why did the Israelites need manna and quail for food in the wilderness when *Exodus* (12:38) records that they were left with flocks and herds, even much cattle ?

Jesus on the Cross Road

280. When Jesus said to John the Baptist that "He is Elias" (Mt 11:14) why did John deny that he was not ? (Jn 1:21)

281. Whether Sermon on the Mount was delivered on a mount (Mt 5:1) or on a levelled place ? (Lk 6:17)

282. Whether Jesus appointed twelve disciples, which included one Thaddaeus and one Judas; (Mt 10:1; Mk 3:13) or the twelve included two Judases: Judas Iscariot, and Judas, the son of James, but not Thaddaeus ? (Lk 6:13; Jn 14:22; Acts 1:12)

283. When the ear of the guard was cut off, did Jesus put it back (Lk 22:50) or he just let it lie on the ground ?

284. Whether Jesus awakened his disciples once in the garden (Lk 22:45) or three times ? (Mt 26:36; Mk 14:32)

285. Whether Jesus had a great deal to say for himself (Jn 18:33-37) or he never answered a word ? (Mt 27:14)

286. Did the cock crow after Peter's thrice denial (Mt 26:34, Lk 22:34) or did it crow at each successive denial not waiting till the conclusion of the three denials? (Mk 14:68-72)

287. Judas betrays Jesus with a kiss (Mt 26:49; Mk 14:43) or Jesus voluntarily turns himself over to the soldiers as soon as he sees them ? (Jn 18:4)

288. Jesus' last words were : "My God. my God, why hast thou forsaken me"? (Mt 27:46) or "Father, into thy hands I command my spirit" ? (Lk 23:46)

289. Was Jesus the only one who rose from the dead (Acts 26:23) or were the son of the widow of Nain(Lk 7:12-19) and Lazarus (Jn 11:43-44) also resurrected before Christ ?

290. Did Jesus carry his cross to Calvary (Jn 19:17) or was it carried by Simon of Cyrene ? (Mt 27:32; Mk 15:21; Lk 23:26)

291. Was Jesus given a scarlet robe to wear on the cross which is a symbol of infamy or a purple robe which is a symbol of royalty ? (Mk 15:17)

292. Jesus was offered a drink of myrrh. (Mk 15:23) or a drink of vinegar ?

293. Was Jesus crucified on a cross or hanged on a tree ? (Acts 5:30; 10:39;13:29)

294. When did the crucifixion take place -- during or just after the day of Passover or on the day before the Passover ? (Jn 19:14-16)

295. Whether the tomb was sealed and guarded (Mt 27:62) or there was no guard and the girls were planning to enter the tomb with gifts and were wandering who might be around to help them to move the rock ? (Mk 16:3)

296. When the women took the spices and went to the tomb did they meet one angel (Mk 16:5) or two angels? (Lk 24:4)

297. When Jesus rose from his tomb did he first meet the women who had come there (Mt 28:9) or his first encounter was with two men walking towards the village Emmaus? (Lk 24: 13-15)

298. What did Judas do with the thirty pieces of silver ? Whether he returned them to the chief priest (Mt 27:3-5) or he bought a field with it ? (Act.1:1:18)

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

The Christians are confined to their Bible. They profusely quote their Bible for every thing and for nothing. Bible is the only book which can save them in this life and hereafter, because it is revealed by God.

I doubt their claim and ask them whether they have any knowledge of any other religion of the world? Do they know that all religions have their own Sacred Books too? The Hindus have their *Vedas* and the *Gita*, the Zoroastrians have their *Zend Avesta*, the Jews have their *Talmud*, the Buddhists have their *Sutras*, the Confucians their *Analects*, the Taoists have their *Tao-Te-Ching*, the Muslims have their *Koran*. They equally believe their Holy Books to be sacred and divinely inspired. Do you believe that too? If you say No, why will others believe your claim?

We have every right to disagree, because Doubt is Knowledge and Faith is Ignorance. The more one doubts the more one knows. But we fear to doubt the doubtful dogmas of the God-given scriptures.

In order to be saved should we believe that an angel of God appeared into Manoah in the absence of her husband, afterward he went up in a flame of fire. That visit gives birth to a child to Manoah, whose strength was in his hair. Can we believe that the angels fell in love with the daughters of men and begat giants; that rainbows are the signs of the covenant between God and man. Again you have to believe that the earth was created in six days; even snake, donkey and burning bush talks to man in human tongue; Moses' magic wand turned the Nile to blood and a stick became a snake;

the sun stood still to help Joshua to win a battle, the story of Jonah and whale is true etc. If you believe each and every thing as true, I have a few more doubts to test your faith :

Believe It or Not

299. that the world was created in six days and day and night came into existence before the sun was created. (Gn 1)

300. that the earth has foundations (Ps 104:5), and pillars. (1 Sa 2:8)

301. that there are four angels standing on the four corners of the earth holding the four winds of the earth. (Rev 7:11)

302. that the sky is strong, and as a molten looking glass. (Jb 37:18)

303. that Heaven is a solid roof, supporting reservoirs of water. (Gn 1:8)

304. that the windows of heaven can be opened. (Gn 7:11)

305. that the world is peopled by incest (Gn 4:17,26). The sons and daughters of Adam and Eve must have committed incest. God could have prevented this by creating two separate pairs of human beings.

306. that the sun stood still for Joshua for the grace of God to enable him to kill a few more innocent people fighting for their homes and families. (Jos 9:7,24)

307. that Aaron by stretching out his hand covers Egypt with frogs. (Ex 8:6-8)

308. that to build a temple, David gives more gold and silver than England and America possess today. (1 Ch 22:14; 2 Ch 9:22,24)

309. that the river Jordon cut itself in two and allowed the lower end to run away. (Jos 3:16)

310. that seven priests could blow seven ram's horns loud enough to throw down the walls of a city. (Jos 6:20)

311. that water can be produced by striking a rock with a stick. (Ex 17:6)

312. that the fate of a battle can be decided by lifting one hand up or letting it fall. (Ex 17:11-12)

313. that twelve wells of water were sufficient for three million people, together with their flocks and herds. (Ex 15:27)

314. that the hare chews the cud. (Lv 11:6)

315. that snake eats dust. (Gn 3:14; Lev 25)

316. that the camel, does not divide the hoof. (Lv 11:4)

317. that there are four-footed fowls. (Lv 11:20)

318. that the key to lengthened life is to rob a bird's nest. (Dt 22:6-7)

319. that a prophet by lying on a dead body could make it sneeze seven times. (2 Ki 4:32-36)

320. that dipping seven times in the Jordan could cure the leprosy. (2 Ki 5:14)

321. that a spear through the body of a woman ever stayed a plague. (Nu 25:8)

322. that in a battle between Jeroboam and Abijah, the army of Abijah actually slew in one day five hundred thousand chosen men. (2 Ch 13:17)

323. that Zerah, the Ethiopian, invaded Palestine with a million men. (2 Ch 14:9)

324. that Pekash slew one hundred and twenty thousand men in one day. (2 Ch 28:6)

325. that Shishshok, King of Egypt, invaded Palestine with seventy thousand horsemen and twelve thousand chariots of war. (2 Ch 12:2-3)

326. that King Amazian broke in pieces ten thousand men by casting them from a precipice. (2 Ch 25:12)

327. that Elijah was taken alive to heaven in a whirlwind.
(2 Kg 2:11)

328. that over the tabernacle there was a cloud during the day and fire by night, and that the cloud lifted up when God wished the Jews to travel, and that until it was lifted they remained in their tents. (Nu 9:16-18)

329. that God objects to a man wearing a garment made of wool and linen, and cares whether a man rounded the corners of his beard (Lv 19:19, 27).

330. that He ever commanded a man to kill his wife because, she differed with him about religion. (Dt 13:6-10)

If you cannot believe each and every thing as true you pretend to be a Christian and you try to clean the outside of the pot and have the inside dirty.



THE VIRGIN-BORN CHILD

The mysterious birth of Jesus the Christ as a virgin-born-child of the Holy Ghost creates a lot of medical problems for the leading historians of the world. If he really existed, let us admit that he was born "according to the flesh" (Rom 1:5), his father's name was Joseph and he died a natural death and did not rise from the death, he was born before his date of birth and he died after his death. But the devoted Christians cannot accept it with the fear that Jesus may be affected with the original sin if he were born like us.

The theory of original sin again leads them to invent the other imaginary theory of resurrection. So Jesus is bound to be the virgin-born-child of God. I know the Christian world cannot excuse me for telling a truth in favour of Jesus, the Man. Now I beg to ask a few more questions relating to his birth. While answering please donot misguide me :

Virgin or a Young Woman

331. While translating the Hebrew word "almah" used in Isaiah (7:14) the RSV used it as "young woman," whereas Matthew quoted it as "Virgin" (1:22). Is it a faithful translation of the Hebrew "almah" into Greek as "parthenos" ?

332. Did not Philip III. and Philip IV ask the Popes Paul V., Gregory V., and Alexander VII. to define the Immaculate Conception and the Popes replied that the doctrine was not definable as it is not in the Scripture ? Did not Franciscans and Dominicans attack each other bitterly over the Immaculate conception and St. Thomas Aquinas denied the doctrine ?

333. Is it not a fact that the early Christians imported their notions of Mary and her miraculous son from the Egyptian Isis, the virgin-mother of Horus ? Can we deny the fact that long before Jesus, Mithra an ancient sun-god was born of a virgin; Attis was born of a virgin mother named Nana, in Phrygia; Buddha was born of the virgin Maya; Quexalcote, the Mexican god was born of a virgin mother named Chimalman; the God Adonis was born of a virgin mother called Ishtar; and Quirinus the Roman god was born of a virgin mother ? If Jesus was the God in the womb of a Virgin mother, doesn't it sound similar to the fable of the Goddess Minerva who is the brain-child of Jupiter. If Jesus became the son of God after being born out of a virgin, what about Hanuman of Ramayan and Karna of Mahabharat, who were born like Jesus ? But are we not bound to say that whatever be it, it resulted in an unplanned parenthood ?

334. How could the Gospel writers know the discussions between Mary and the Holy Ghost ? How was the dream of Joseph communicated to Matthew ?

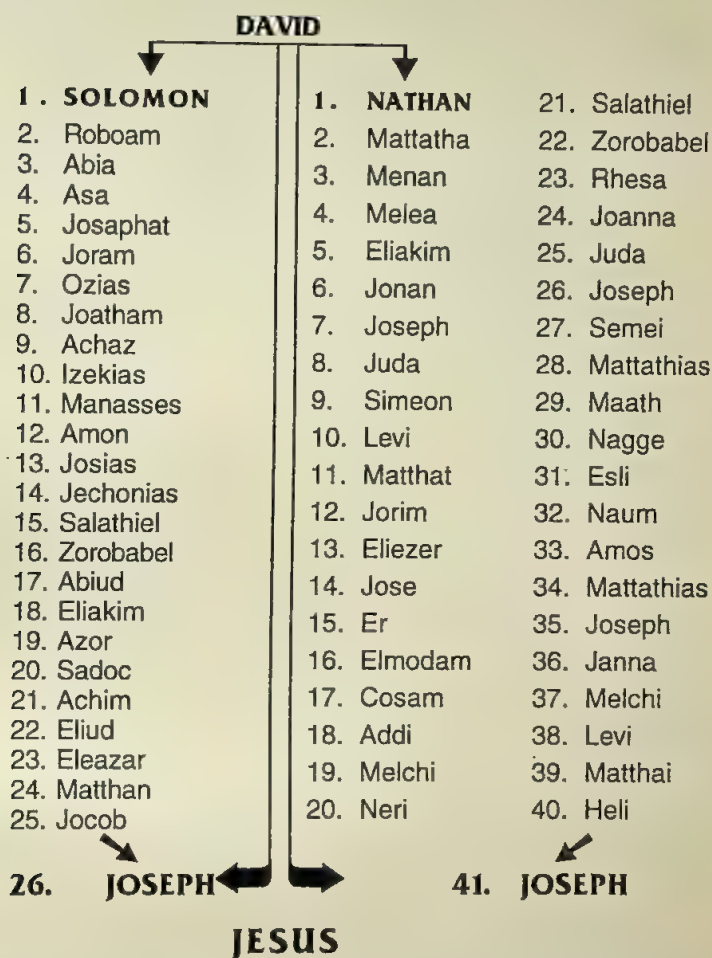
From David to Jesus

335. Both Matthew and Luke have given the genealogy of Jesus and have shown that he was of the house of David, through Joseph. Moreover it is claimed that he was born of a virgin by the Holy Ghost. If he is the son of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost he ceases to be the son of Joseph. Therefore he cannot come under the Davidic line. If Christ was not the son of Joseph how can he be the great-grand-son of David ? If one is not the son of his father how can he be the grand-son of his grand-father ? Moreover, what happened to the royal line of David at the time of the Babylonian captivity ? How did his seed survive through the exile ?

336. Both Matthew and Luke give a Genealogy of Jesus Christ from David till Joseph, the husband of Mary. The former says 28 whereas the later 43. If Matthew is correct Luke is false, if Luke is correct Matthew is false. Both cannot be correct. Let us see how they agree to disagree :

According to
MATTHEW 1:6 - 16

According to
LUKE 3:23 - 31



337. While comparing the ancestry of Christ as recorded in Luke and Matthew, one notices six major differences:

i. The reputed father of Jesus, Joseph had two fathers, one named Jacob (Mt 1:16), the other Heli (Lk 3:23). But the Lucan genealogy traces Jesus' lineage actually, though not

explicitly, through Mary, his mother, by suggesting that Mary was a descendant of David (Lk 1:32). The Talmud, the source from which the Jewish Law is derived, suggests that Heli was the father of Mary. The Talmudic reference is important for our knowledge of how the Jews interpreted the Old Testament. It also throws light on portions of the New Testament. So the word "Mary" can be read in *Luke* 3:23 in place of "Joseph" and the word "son" can be replaced with the word "daughter."

ii. From Matthew, we learn that Christ is a descendant of Solomon, son of David, but Luke says that he is a descendant of Nathan, another son of David.

iii. From Matthew, we notice that Christ's forefathers, from David to the people of the Babylonian captivity, were kings and notables, but Luke lists no famous people apart from David and Nathan.

iv. According to Matthew and *1 Chronicles*, Shealtiel is the son of Jeconias, but Luke says he is the son of Neri. Again Zerubbabel is mentioned by Matthew and Luke as the son of Salathiel whereas *1 Chronicles* assures him to be the son of Pedaiah and the nephew of Shealtiel. (1 Ch 3:19-20)

v. Matthew contradicts himself when he counts thirteen names as fourteen, and omits the names of three kings. Matthew says Abiud was the son of Zorobabel (1:13). Luke says Zorobabel's son was Rhesa (3:27). The Old Testament contradicts both, and gives Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith, their sister and five other sons (1 Ch 3:19), as names of Zorobabel's children. But neither Matthew's Abiud nor Luke's Rhesa is among the seven sons mentioned in *1 Chronicles*.

vi. Matthew records 26 generations between David and Christ, whereas Luke mentions 41. If we calculate and compare both Matthew's and Luke's genealogy it makes a difference of some 400 years.

338. Matthew sums up the genealogy thus : "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations;

and from David until the carrying away to Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations" (1:17). The third series should have thirteen generations and second series having fourteen generations has omitted four names: Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah; between Joram and Azariah (Ozias); and Jehoiakim between Josiah and Jeconiah. One can compare I *Chronicles* (3:11-12, 15-16) with *Matthew* (1:8-9, 11) to know the difference. Again if the first part ends with David; he should be excluded from the beginning of the next part which should begin with Solomon and end with Jeconiah. If Jeconiah ends the second division, his name cannot be included in the beginning of the third; this would mean that the third section begins with Shealtiel and ends with Christ-- only 13 generations.

339. If Josiah begat Jeconiah and his brothers during the Babylonian Captivity (Mt 1:11) it is necessary to prove that Josiah was not Jeconiah's grandfather but his father (1 Ch 3:15,16), that Johanan, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah, and Shallum were not Josiah's sons and Jeconiah had any brother, and Josiah did not die twenty years before the Babylonian Captivity.

340. If the time from Judah to Salmon was nearly 300 years, and from Salmon to David, 400 years how did Matthew write that in the first period there were seven generations and in the second, five generations as during the first period people lived longer than in the second ?

341. If Joram begat Uzziah (Mt 1:18) how did Uzziah become the son of Ahaziah ? (2 Ki 8, 12, 14; 2 Ch 22, 24, 25)

Confused History

342. If king Herod murdered almost all the children of Bethlehem in order to kill the child Jesus why was such an important crime missing from the contemporary writings of the Talmud Rabbis, Josephus and Joseph ben Matthai when a numerous other crimes of Herod were recorded by them ?

343. Whether Joseph and his family fled to Egypt, where Jesus grew up (Mt 2:13) or Jesus grew up in Nazareth (Lk

2:39)? Why did Mark and John seem to be indifferent towards such happenings ?

344. If Joseph came to Bethlehem to pay taxes and had stayed in a manger, where Jesus was born and the shepherds heard the angels and came to visit Jesus as St Luke (2:1-7) knew, why did Matthew, Mark and John not mention it ?

345. When the narrative of Matthew says that Mary and Joseph lived in Bethlehem and went to Nazareth only to escape the wrath of Herod, Luke should agree with that account. But Luke tells a different story that Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth and went to Bethlehem in order to register themselves in a census during the period of Quirinius who was the Governor of Syria then (Lk 2:1-2). Can one deny the fact that Herod died in 4 BC and Quirinius did not become governor of Syria until 6 AD ? This dichotomy reveals that the time of Jesus' birth according to Matthew and as described by Luke has a gap of atleast 11 years and 11 years is too long a gap. that he was never an appointed governor by Herod. It leads to another question, whether Quirinus was the Governor or was it Quintilius Versus ?

346. Matthew is the only author who tells the story of Herod killing all the children who were below two years of age. Jesus escaped from Herod because of a previous warning by the angel. If all the children were killed how did John escape who was also then below two years?

347. Did Matthew and Luke not confuse us when Matthew said that the holy family went to Egypt until the death of Herod (2:14), whereas Luke said that they waited 40 days for the Purification and went to Nazareth and lived there ? Does he know anything of the family's flight into Egypt and Herod's killing the innocents ?

348. The story of the return from Egypt opens with the angel's assurance to Joseph that "those who wanted to kill the child are dead" (Mt 2:20). But the story speaks of only Herod, then who does the word "those" refer to?

Nativity Stories of Jesus

349. When Luke never heard of the star and Matthew knew nothing of the heavenly host, Luke never heard of the wisemen and Matthew never knew the shepherds, Luke knew nothing about Herod and the murder of children whereas Matthew talks about Joseph who was warned by the angel to fly to Egypt with his family, on what common grounds are we supposed to believe both these accounts to be true when Matthew and Luke do not agree with each other ?

350. Which nativity story do we believe-- Luke's version of the coming of the angel and the shepherds or Matthew's description of the star and the coming of the wisemen of the East?

351. How many other Jews were named as Jesus ?

Birth Place and Date

352. Can one tell the exact date of birth of Jesus? Is it on January 6, March 25, or December 25, and about 6 BC, or about 6 AD ?

353. Is it not a fact that though there are a lot of controversies regarding his date of birth but one thing is certain that Jesus never told a single word regarding the celebration of his birthday? Did the apostles, whom Jesus taught personally, celebrate his birthday ?

354. Was Jesus really born on December 25 ? Could his birthday have occurred in the month of December ? When the angel announced Jesus' birth to the shepherds of Bethlehem, they were feeding their flocks at night in the open fields (Lk 2:6-8)? Is not the climate of Judea from December to February just too cold to take care of the flocks in the open fields ? (*Song of Solomon* 2:11; *Ezra* 10:9, 13)

355. Can one tell the exact birth place of Jesus ? Whether he was born at Nazareth of Galilee or Bethlehem or at Judea ? The nativity stories tell us that he was born at Bethlehem as it was the city of David predicted in Micah (5:2) but others deny it. (7:41-42)

Baby Without Daddy

356. Can we give a scientific base to the fact that a child can be born without a father? If God could create such a vast world without the help of others, what is the need of creating his only son with the help of a married woman?

357. Mary was already married to Joseph before she was conceived by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost has no right to insert a soul into the womb of a woman who ceremonially belonged to a certain man, who was kept in dark all the while of this intrusion. Is not Holy Ghost liable to an offence, as law does not permit two persons to deal with a faithful woman?

358. If Mary was married and had so many other children what is the justification for believing that Jesus was not the son of Joseph? That may be the reason that the Jewish contemporaries of Jesus chided him with being of illegitimate birth. If a young girl staying alone receives a visit from a young man with a bird and she becomes pregnant and when asked, who made the child she answers: "it was the bird" is it believable?

359. If Jesus is the only son of God what about we the mankind? If we claim like clergy that Jesus is the spiritual son of God, then mankind must be the physical sons of God. But we are very sure that God needs no spiritual or physical son, because He is the father of all. Is it not an insult to God to call Jesus His only son? If Jesus is the only son of God, Mary must be the only wife of God. Being the mother of the son of God, God ceases to be the universal parent of mankind. Besides, how could Mary be the mother of her Father who created her?

The Son of Joseph

360. Is there any hint in the earliest gospel like St Mark regarding the virgin begetting a child called Jesus? Does John not rule out this fact entirely by saying, Jesus the word, "made flesh" and record without the remark of the Jews that Jesus was the son of Joseph (Jn 6:41-42)? Was not Paul

affirmed that Jesus came from Davidic ancestry that too his birth was "according to the flesh" ? (Rom 1:3) In spite of such strong evidences why are the Christians proud to make Jesus the son of a virgin and forget the prophecy that he will come as a descendant of David ? (Acts 13:22)

Born of Woman

361. Was not Jesus a sinner because he was "born of woman, born under the Law" (Gal 4:4-5)? If he was not a sinner why was he circumcised (Lk 2:21) and underwent baptism (Mt 3:15)? Was Mary, the mother of Jesus, free from a ritual purification after Jesus's birth (Lk 2:22) which was a requirement of the Mosaic Law ? (Ex 13:2,13)



THE SON OF A CARPENTER

One who thinks Jesus to be the son of the Jewish God, who was born from a virgin, and died like a man, rose from death like superman and went to heaven with mortal body is far from a historical view of Jesus. Jesus as a man deserves more attention than Jesus the God of the Holy Trinity. He was generous, compassionate, loving and sensitive but at times narrow-minded, vindictive, discourteous, ethnocentric and hypocritical in his behaviour. He was within the cultural prejudices of his time.

Christianity remained a religion of the fishermen in the days of Christ. It grew among the illiterates and was never questioned. But as more and more people became educated they found it difficult to accept the Bible as a Book of Divine Revelation.

The Gnostic of the first century, the Marcionites of the second century, the Neo-Platonic and the Manichean of the third century and the Pelagian of the fourth century had already challenged Christianity for its scriptural errancy and ridiculed the concept of virgin birth and salvation by faith.

In subjective and objective level the Biblical scholars brought Bible to the level of a purely human book and sincerely challenged God, the Bible and Christ.

When Jesus asked: "What think ye of Christ?" (Mt 22:42) the Gnostics denied him as a man of flesh and blood rather considered him a Phantom. The liberal cults deny his virgin birth, atoning death and keep his resurrection and second coming not fact but literal and fictional. Robert Green Ingersoll

puts Jesus in the level of an ordinary man. In his words:

Is Christ our example ?

He never said a word in favor of Education. He never even hinted at the existence of any science. He never uttered a word in favour of industry, economy or of any effort to better our condition in this world. He was the enemy of the successful, of the wealthy. Dives was sent to hell, not because he was bad, but because he was rich. Lazarus went to heaven, not because he was good, but because he was poor.

Christ cared nothing for painting, for sculpture, for music—nothing for any art. He said nothing about the duties of nation to nation, of king to subject; nothing about rights of man; nothing about intellectual liberty or the freedom of speech. He said nothing about the sacredness of home; not one word for the fireside ; not a word in favor of marriage, in honour of maternity.

He never married. He wandered homeless from place to place with a few disciples. None of them seem to have been engaged in any useful business and they seem to have lived on alms.

All human ties were held in contempt; this world was sacrificed for the next ; all human effort was discouraged. God would support and protect.

At last, in the dusk of death, Christ, finding that he was mistaken, cried out : "My God ! My God ! Why hast thou forsaken me !"

The Works, Vol, III, in 12 vols
New York : Dresden Publishing Co.,
1901:508.

Son of Man

362. Is Jesus the only son of God? If he is the only son of God how has God confessed in his Bible : The Lord hath said unto me (David), thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee (Hs 2:7), Jehovah says of Solomon: I will be his father, and he shall be my son (2 Sam 7:14). I have said, ye are Gods, and all of you are children of the most high (Ps 82:6). The phrase "Son of God" cannot be interpreted otherwise for Jesus. The befitting phrase for Jesus is "Son of Man", because Matthew used the phrase 17 times, Mark 12 times, Luke 21 times and John 11 times. Jesus failed to convince people of his sonship with God, so they crucified him. Had he a little more patience to convince people he could have lived a bit longer and fulfilled the prophecies.

363. Did Jesus claim to be God's son at any time and confess it before Matthew, Mark and Luke ? Is it not a fact that except John (1:1-18) none of the writers of the gospel refer to Jesus as God who became a human being ?

364. Is it a fact that except St John (1:29-34) none of the gospel writers refer to John the Baptist as the one who proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah ?

Choosing Careless Disciple

365. Choosing Peter at the first place in the group of 12 apostles Jesus seems to be a poor judge of character. Does not Peter derecognise Christ, when Christ was in danger ? Why did Jesus unnecessarily wish to establish his church upon such a barren "rock" ?

366. How were Matthew, Mark and John quite ignorant about the fact that Herod put John in prison ?

367. How were Matthew, Mark and John unknown about Jesus' healing a government official's son and John ignorant about Jesus' healing a leprosy patient and a paralyzed man ?

368. Did Matthew, Mark and John ever talk about Jesus' greatest miracle which he did by raising a widow's son from the dead and healing the blind?

369. How was Jesus' walking on water unknown to Luke and Jesus feeding four thousand were not that important for Luke and John ?

370. If Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead how did Matthew, Mark and Luke not tell a word about it ?

371. If Jesus ascends into heaven how did Matthew and John not know it?

Questions to Christ

372. How old were you when you joined the carpentry business? Did you enjoy doing it?

373. Why did you not invent some sawing mills, circular saws and mortising machines etc which would have enhanced the quality of work as well as helped save labour and time if you were an omnipotent God ?

374. Did you not feel that such inventions would have assisted immortalizing you?

A Human Death

375. As Christ died for us so we should die for him. Is not the death of Christ a barter?

376. The Christian world believed that Christ died for us. Whether he died with the wish of God or he died willfully ? If he died willfully why did he cry ? If he died with the wish of God, it is not new, all creatures of the universe die with the wish of God. How can Christ die for our sin ? If A is a sinner B cannot be responsible for A's sin. To make A suffer for B, is no justice.

377. Are we not astonished to know that Jesus who could cure a leper by his touch, raise the son of widow of Nain and gave sight to a blind man found himself alone at the time of his trial. Nobody told in his favour and stood by him ?

378. Is it a fact that by breaking the Sabbath (Mt 12:1-3; Jn 5:16) Jesus got the penalty of death ? (Ex 31:15; Nu 15:32, 36)

379. Is it true that God, the cruel father of Christ, forsook him and turned his back for which our Christ cried out so piteously, "Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani?" What will God, who didn't even care to listen His son, do to the others?

380. Why were such extraordinary events like Christ's death and resurrection amidst pre-natural darkness and earthquakes not recorded by the Roman historians of the day?

381. Socrates, Regulus and numerous others of those brave heroes of olden times accepted death bravely with smiles on their faces, but there is no example of such fear and weakness felt from death as shown by Jesus the God.

382. When Christ was under trial, the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate and his wife were in support of Christ. He was under pressure from the bigoted Jews and had to pass the order. When Jesus was being taken to Calvary carrying a cross on his shoulders the cross was given to another man among the crowd. What proof is there that Judas kissed the right man? That means the real Christ was relieved and escaped? It proves someone else died for him. Besides, is it believable that the son of God cried like an ordinary man on the cross. That again confirms us that an ordinary person must have died helplessly, whereas Jesus, being supported by the Governor and his wife, disappeared from the crowd.

383. How did Mark, Luke, and John not notice the important events such as an earthquake upon Jesus' death, the tombs opening and dead rising as Matthew thought of? Why did Matthew, John and the entire Roman Empire except Mark not feel that the sun was blotted out for three hours over the whole world during the crucifixion?

Who Removed the Stone

384. Mary Magdalene went to the tomb of Jesus in the morning (Jn 20:1) in order to *anoint* or to rub his body. Is there any tradition to rub a rotten dead body after three days among the Judeo-Christian religion?

385. If we believe that Mary Magdalene reached the tomb when the stone had already been rolled away and the winding sheets bundled on the ledge within the sepulchre, the question comes how was the stone removed and why were the winding sheets found unwound?

386. How could Magdalene not recognize Jesus and thought him to be a gardener (Jn 20:15)? Does it not reveal that Jesus, to save his life from the Jews, disguised himself as gardener?

387. If Magdalene was seeking for a dead body how could she bury it alone? From their conversation it is obvious that Jesus was not dead. If he was dead why did he say: "For I am not yet ascended unto my Father" that means "I am not yet dead."

388. Is it wrong to suspect that Jesus escaped death by his secret disciples Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who temporarily removed the stone that same friday night to send him to a safe place to survive?

Myth of Resurrection

389. How can an important event like Jesus appearing at once to over five hundred persons sometime after his death be missing in the records of all gospels except in Paul's record? (1 Cor 15:6)

390. Christ rose with a material body and ascended into heaven. Was it a historical fact or a spiritual vision? If he really ascended unto heaven, what happens to his body in heaven? Can he ascend to heaven beyond clouds, moon, the sun and stars? Or his heaven was every where? Again Paul says: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal 2:20). Does the passage refer to the historical death, burial, and resurrection of Christ or to Paul's mystical version of crucifixion and resurrection of Christ within his life? If it is so, the resurrection of Christ is unauthentic.

391. Christ should remain three days in the heart of the earth but he was buried on Friday and rose on Sunday, i.e., one day and two nights -- aggregating at the most forty-eight hours. Is it equal to three days, or seventy-two hours? Moreover, the old Greek Saviour God Dionysus beat him by rising from the dead on the second day and later ascended into Heaven.



DOWN FROM THE DEVILS

The Bible teaches that sin entered the world as a result of the transgression of Adam and Eve in paradise. They became sinners after eating the forbidden fruit of good and evil. But I believe that man is essentially good. He can not be a born sinner. He needs the principle of growth, growth through free inquiry, scientific experimentation and broad education. To make life better, man has created goodness and to make the life of a man worse God has created evil. (Isa 45:7)

The *Book of Revelation* reveals that Satan, who was once one of the chief angels, fought with God and was defeated. His defeat brought mankind many discoveries and inventions. God's curse to women to bear unbearable pain during child birth was defeated by the invention of chloroform which is a visible example of God's defeat and Satan's victory. That may be the reason for which the great reformer Martin Luther praised Satan: "the wonderful cleverness displayed by knowing Satan against poor half-witted God." (Qtd. Chapman Cohen, *The Devil*, Pioneer Press, London:8)

The Elizabethan dramatist Christopher Marlowe made Satan the hero of his drama *Dr Faustus* and the German poet Goethe made him the chief protagonist in his *Dr Faust*. John Milton, a devoted Christian, made Satan an important character in his epic the *Paradise Lost*, where Satan's oft-quoted line: "better to reign in hell than serve in heaven" tells the strength of Satan.

Epicurus rightly questions the Omnipotent God in order to educate man to stand independently. He explains why or how does evil exist :

Either God wants to abolish evil and cannot,
Or he can but does not want to;
Or he cannot and does not want to,
Or lastly, he can and wants to.

If he wants to remove evil, but cannot, he is not omnipotent.

If he can but does not want to, he is not benevolent.

If he neither can nor wants to, he is neither omnipotent nor benevolent.

But if God can abolish evil and wants to, how does evil exist.

Like Epicurus, Carducci also makes Satan say in his *Hymn to Satan*: I animate all who fight against servitude and *sqmnolence*. The heroes and martyrs of liberty and progress in every age have drunk the strength of my spirit. I inspire the revolter, the scorner, the sceptic, the satirist. I still distribute the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. I am the soul of the world. The fire of my inspiration may consume, but it gives unspeakable rapture. I am the Prometheus of the universe, and keep it from stagnating under the icy hand of power. Milton, Goethe and Byron made me the hero of their greatest poems, and felt my power... Burns spoke of me with a tenderness he never displayed towards God. Wits and humorists own my sway. I moved the minds of Aristophanes, Lucian of Erasmus and Rabelais, and through the pen of Voltaire, I shattered the mental slavery of Europe. I am the lightning of the human mind. I level thrones and altars and annihilate binding customs. With the goad of a restless aspiration, I urge men on, until they outgrow faith and fear, until the Slave stands erect before the Tyrant and defies his curse (Qtd. Conen, *The Devil*:14). Somebody has rightly said, take away Satan from the Bible and there will be neither the Bible nor Christianity.

God's Great Creation

392. Was Lucifer in the beginning a very faithful angel of God but was proud of his beauty and corrupted his

wisdom ? Does that make him a terrible enemy of God ? (Ize 28:16-17; Isa 14:13-14)

393. Worried by Satan did God send him from heaven and an angel to bind him in a bottomless abyss for a thousand years (Rev 20:2)? Was he loosened at the expiry of the punishment and again created havoc so God had to cast him into the lake of fire and brimstone in which he shall be tormented day and night for ever (Rev 20:20)? Does not the whole myth prove God's poverty and infantile reference to Satan ?

394. Where is that bottomless pit and the lake of fire and brimstone located ? If God keeps fighting with a single Lucifer what about, if there is a group of them ?

395. If Devil once was the chief angel in heaven and fought with God and lost the war as the *Book of Revelation* says, why did God allow him in His creation, instead of treating Satan as the *Allies* did to Napoleon after his return from *Elba* ?

396. How and when did the serpent come to the garden of Eden ? Who created him and on which of the six days of creation was he created ? Was he walking or flying because after the curse he only crawled ?

397. Is Satan self-created or God has created him ? If he is self created he is equal to God both in power and position ? If God created Satan He is responsible for all the evils that is happening.

398. Who has created the "bottomless pit" (Rev. 17.8)? How was it brought to light ? Why did God allow Satan to hold his fiery pit in His kingdom ?

399. Can Satan be condemned as the father of lies (Jn 8:44) when we see him telling the truth to Eve that she will not die the same day when she will eat the forbidden fruit ? (Gn 3:4)

400. If God is the Omnipresent Being covering all space, where is space for Satan to exist ? A poet rightly sang:

God made the Devil
and the Devil made sin,

So God almighty made a hole
to put the Devil in.

God's Grand Plan

401. Is not it a fact that Devil, Christ and God are the Holy Trinity of Christianity? Wither away the Devil and there would have been no Fall, no Scheme of Redemption and no plan of salvation. Devil brought Jesus to the forefront. It is Devil who multiplied two into multitude. Can the Christians deny the importance of Devil?

402. According to St. Mark, Christ cast out the Devil. The Devil left the man and went into two thousand swine. They rushed down a steep place into the sea and were drowned. Were there two thousand devils in the man or one devil became thousand parts when it entered the swines? When the swines were drowned what happened to the devils? Whether they died or they entered into the fishes? Is it the same kind of the seven devils which Christ extracted from Mary Magdalene?

403. If Biblical God can do and undo things why could He not wipe out sin from the world after sending a disastrous flood? Sin began again and God sent his only son to save this world. Could His son after crucifixion also do much for mankind?

404. If the wicked are to be punished eternally in Hell (Mt 25:46) how can God destroy the Hell (Ho 13:14)? How can God control Satan (Jb 1:12), when Satan tempts God? (Mt 4:1)

The Great Servant

405. In one place it is written that Satan provokes David to number them (1 Ch 21:1). In another place it is said, God moves him to number them (2 Sa 24:1). If both statements are true, then is not God and Satan one and the same person with two names?

406. It seems from 1 Samuel (16:14) that God keeps by Him an army of evil spirits that He sends out from time to time at His command. When "the Spirit of the Lord departed

from Saul," "an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." Is it not contrary to God's nature ?

407. When devil transported Christ to the High mountain how high was the mountain and in what way did he carry Christ to that ? It is again said that the devil offered Christ all the Kingdoms of the earth. Did not Christ know that whatever the devil showed him belonged to his Father ? If Christ knew that, is it in any way a credit to Christ that he did not accept the offer and did not yield to temptation ? Is not this a tale worthy of *The Thousand and One Nights* ? The story of devil astonishes us when we know that the perfect God allows the devil to tempt the first human ?

408. Who was the eye-witness between the Devil and Christ when Christ spent his holidays in the wilderness ?

God's Great Game

409. If God knew well that Adam and Eve must fall when he made them then why should they be blamed for their action ? Is not it a fact that God is merely an explanation to save an explanation ?

410. If God lacks nothing, then why has He created a universe of His own ? It is said, as He had an overflowing love for us He created this world. This overflowing love for anything is always dangerous. This love created an angel who was disobedient and became His main opponent. That angel became Satan and made Adam to be disobedient to his creator. The great powerful God didnot say a word to destroy Satan but cursed mankind to be sinner.

411. It is said that God hates sin but loves the sinner. But I donot understand why did God create sin at all? Is it because of His love for humankind ?

Careless God

412. God's absence from the Garden, gave a chance to Satan to misguide the pair and upset the future plan of the Omnipresent and Omnipotent God. Who is to be blamed, God, Satan or Adam and Eve ?

413. If all men and women are born sinners because of Adam and Eve, who is to be blamed? If all the pots turned out by a potter are full of cracks should not we blame the potter?

414. When Satan committed a crime Eve was punished. When Eve committed a sin on behalf of Satan why did God curse woman society as a whole? If Satan is the bone of contention, why did God punish mankind without punishing Satan? Is it wise to say: "in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children" (Gn 3:16), and describe labour pain as a curse of God? If it is a curse why are animals not free from the labour pain? Ingersoll rightly explains: "Our God made love the slave of pain, made wives serfs, and brutalized the firesides of the world." (*Works* III:410)

Born Sinner

415. What causes sin? Was eating an apple the sin of our first parents or committing adultery? If the sin of Adam was necessary to produce the atonement, why did God blame Adam? I have always been taught that God loves the sinner, though he hates sin (Ps 5:4-6; 11:5). It is a contradictory statement. So I do ask a question to God -- why was I born without my consent, when I have to inherit the original sin which is like washing a child and letting it play in the mud again?

416. How can the whole human race, by birth, become sinner because of the Sin of Adam and Eve? If a father is a thief, is it necessary that his son should also be a thief? Can a person be a sinner without committing any sin, a criminal without committing any crime? Can A suffer for the acts of B and vice versa? Can sin be hereditary?

417. If Adam's sin happens to relapse on us, what was the purpose of the flood and the advent of Christ? It is like the doctor swallowing the medicine and making the patient cured?



PROMISE MADE IN TEMPEST

Salute to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel who were the mouthpiece of God's voice. They were poets so they were called prophets. On behalf of God they forecast doom and interpret dreams.

Thanks to Moses, the first Prophet of the Old Testament, who gave the five sacred books called Pentateuch and told us the first story of Garden of Eden. But he did hide the source of his thesis and the writing tools he employed. He brought two tablets of stone called Ten Commandments believed to be engraved with the divine finger. It existed in Moses' memory and record.

He himself recorded that, there arose not a prophet ever since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face (Dt:34:10). He narrowly escaped death when God tried to kill him in an inn (Ex 4:24). He certified himself that he was very meek, above all the men who were upon the face of the earth (Nu 12:3). Reference to his death and grave at Bethpeor (Dt 34:6) creates doubt about the authorship of the author of Pentateuch. Except leading the Jews out of enslavement in Egypt for forty years his teaching and preaching seems to us rude and crude.

Let us examine these Prophets of God who worked as mediator between God and man. It is said God cannot change the past and man cannot tell the future. The Biblical prophets are masters in the art of exploiting the past for the future of man. Truly speaking we are very much misguided by God, by His prophets and by God's only son Jesus. Let us explore how far this statement is true:

Be Aware of False Prophets

418. God tells Adam that if he eats up the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he will surely die on that day (Gn 3:16). But he lived to the ripe age of nine hundred and thirty years and bore several children (Gn 5:50). Did God mean that His one day is equal to 930 years for man?

419. Was Cain a wanderer (Gn 4:9,12) or he lived a settled life in the land of Nod and built a city in the name of his son Enoch? (Gn 4:16-17)

420. Did Abraham receive the land of Canaan and his descendants, the Jews retained it for ever (Gn 17:3,8; 13:15; Ex 32:13) or he never received the land God promised even not to set his foot on? (Acts 7:5)

421. Were the Israelites afflicted as slaves in Egypt for 400 years (Gn 15:13) or they were in Egypt for 215 years? If we accept that Jacob entered Egypt in 1706 BC and the exodus under Moses took place in 1491 BC, only 215 years remain.

422. Did Jacob return from Egypt as promised by God (Gn 66:3-4, 67:28-29) or he died in Egypt? (Gn 49:33)

423. Like God his prophet Isaiah prophesies that the city of Damascus shall be "a ruinous heap" (17.1). But to our astonishment the city of Damascus, the capital of Syria today is one of the oldest cities of the world.

424. In Isaiah (52:1) it is said that from the days of Isaiah onwards, no one who is uncircumcised or unclean would be able to come into the city of Jerusalem. Can one prove that those who are in Jerusalem today are clean and circumcised?

Prophecy on Jesus

425. Is it not a fact that Jesus made his disciples await with the words: "Behold, I come quickly (Rev 3:11), and repeatedly assured his disciples to return from the dead very soon (Mt 24:34; Lk 21:32) for which his beloved disciples waited and waited till the last one died? Does "quickly" mean

2000 years when he said: "There are some standing here, who shall not taste death, till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom" ? (Mt 16:28)

426. Did Isaiah prophesize for Jesus when he said: "a virgin shall conceive, he will be called Immanuel" (7:14-16)? Neither Jesus was born from a virgin nor his popular name was Immanuel as he was always called Jesus except by those who imposed this name on him in order to fulfil the alleged prophecy.

427. We are told by St. Luke (2:4-6) that Joseph and Mary went to their ancestral city of Bethlehem for a tax census, and that was why they were there when Jesus was born. This just happened to fulfil a prophecy that the messiah would be born in Bethlehem. (Mi 5:2) So Luke had to get Mary to Bethlehem in order to have Jesus there to fulfil the prophecy. The town of Nazareth, where Joseph and Mary lived would have been affected by a Roman order if it was not under Herod Antipas. Josephus gives the details of this census in his *Antiquities of the Jews* (18:1). Luke was not serious when he talked about the Roman governor, Cyrenius. We admit that Cyrenius conducted one census that occurred when Jesus might have been a 10 year boy. Both Luke (1:5) and Matthew (2:1) again confused us by stating that Herod the Great was the ruler of Judea and Galilee at the time of Jesus' birth. Since the Romans were not even in charge then, they could not have ordered a census for tax purposes. Herod the Great died in 4 BC. The prophecy of Micah as quoted by Luke is out of place and it has nothing to do with the fulfillment of the prophecy. Either Cyrenius was the ruler of Bethlehem and Nazareth or Herod the Great. Can both be the ruler of one place at one time to fulfil the prophecy of Micah?

428. Is it prophesized about Christ that seventy weeks are determined upon his people and upon holy his city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to

make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, to anoint the Most Holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three-score and two weeks the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after three-score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself (Dn 9:24-26). Can it be a prediction of Jesus' appearance and death? If seventy weeks mean prophetic weeks i.e., one week symbolizing one year, it will refer to seventy years of captivity or seventy seven equals to 490 years. If Daniel died in 534 BC the prophecy should be applicable to Jesus at best 44 years after. But 77 years were needed for the crucifixion or atonement of Christ. If we seriously examine verse 25 it tells 483 years from the edict to restore Jerusalem, which was issued by Cyrus in 536 BC, wrong by at least 53 years. It is unbelievable that messiah shall be cut off 434 years after his appearance as he lived only for 33 years.

429. Is Christ the person talked about in the prophecy "the remnant of Jacob shall be... as a lion among the beasts of the forest. Thine hand shall be lifted upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off (Mi 5: 2-9)? But did anything of the sort happen as prophesied after the coming of Christ? Did the "remnant of Jacob" exterminate all their enemies and become a lion among the sheep or was he a victim who went to the cross like a lamb?

430. The Jews split into two nations called Judah and Israel. The King of Syria alongwith the king of Israel made war jointly against Ahaz, the king of Judah. In such a critical situation Isaiah tempted Ahaz to ask for a sign from the Lord that Ahaz denied. Isaiah consoled Ahaz with the above cited prophecy that his wife for whom he said a *young woman* shall conceive

and bear a son who shall save him from the danger. Did not Isaiah mean it to Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah ? (Is 8:2) Is it not mere foolishness to call Mary the mother of Jesus as virgin, who was married to Joseph ? How can Jesus be of any help to Ahaz after 700 years ? It is clear that Isaiah prophesized for the wife of the king of Ahaz for whom he said a *young woman* shall conceive and bear a son. Would not it be more obvious if God provided the information in detail to his prophet that Mary, the daughter of Joachism and Anna will conceive and shall give birth at Bethlehem to a son, whose name would be Jesus ?

431. When Isaiah tells that the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called *Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace* (9:6), he never hinted at Jesus Christ because the goverment was never upon his shoulder, neither any body called him Wonderful, nor Consellor. Did any one call him the *mighty God* or *everlasting Father* or *everlasting Son Of Man* or *son of God*? Though sometimes people called him the *Prince of Peace* but Jesus himself declared that he came not to send peace but a sword. (Mt 10:34)

432. Did ~~the~~ heavens shake, the earth and the sea, and the dry land and all nations shake before the birth of Christ was he the desire of all nations (Hg 2: 6-9)? Did the prophesy: "And I shall fill this house with glory... The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former" come true regarding Christ (Hg 2: 6-9)? The prophesy of the universal earthquake which was to accompany the birth of Christ seems to have passed unnoticed and it would not be appropriate to say that Christ was the desire of all nations. The phrase "a little while" referred to Christ's coming did not mean 500 years because Christ came 500 years after the prophesy. If we go a little ahead and read verse 21 and 23 of the same book, the prophesy becomes clear as it was meant for Zerubbabel, the then Governor and not Christ:

433. Did Isaiah talk about Jesus or Jesse when he said that he would be withered and ugly (53:2). When identified, the person with the signs would be silent before his judges (53:7), would be buried with criminals and executed in the company of rich and never employ any violence or deceit (53:9)? Was Jesus a withered root or frightfully ugly? (Lk 2:40,52; Mk 12:37) Did he not answer to Pilate? (Jn 18:33-37, 21-33) Did he make his grave with criminals with the rich being buried in the sepulchre of the rich Joseph of Arimathaea and was he not among the thieves in his death? Did he not commit acts of violence in the Temple premises? (Jn 2: 15 ; Mk 11:15)

434. Like the four evangelists of the New Testament the Christian world shouted at the top of its voice that Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies of the Old Testament. They forget that it were Jewish prophecies by the Jewish prophets for the Jewish people. Messiah was in their national heritage and to accept Jesus or not was up to them. Jesus did not claim Messiahhood by himself. He quoted that John the Baptist had proclaimed him the Messiah though John was skeptical about it. Jesus said that John was Elias that too was not accepted by John (Lk 7:19-20; Jn 1:20-21). This shows that Jesus' claiming to be the Messiah is simply an eye wash for his followers not affecting the chosen people of God.

435. Did God give Jesus the throne of his father David; did he reign over the house of Jacob forever (Lk 1:32, 33)? This prophesy also seems to be falsified as Jesus never received the throne of David nor did he reign over the house of Jacob who rejected him. The Jews still reject him and the Gospels so the prophesy remains unfulfilled. In Palestine throughout Jewish history there were several claimants to the throne of Israel and each of them was a Jesus Christ. In those days kings were divine and were also saviours of their people. So if "Christ" means the "anointed one", the term is not used only for Jesus (Mt 1:16) because this title is used

for every ruler of the Jews be he good or bad? Is this term not used for David and Saul (Ps 18:50; 132:10; 1 Sam 24:6,10; 1 Sam 26:9; 2 Sam 1:14) and sometime for heathen kings like Cyrus?



TRINITY : A DIVINE MATHEMATICS

Trinity is a mysterious mathematics. Mathematics teaches us that one plus one plus one is equal to three. But the celestial mathematics proves, that one is three means three times one is one. If one takes two from three, three again remains. Like subtraction, its addition is also peculiar. Adding two to one is also one. That means one + one + one is equal to one. But the interpreters of the dogma explain $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$. But they forget that the Father is one, the Son is one and the Holy Ghost is one. How can they be one not three? You have God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost. In spite of that the word "Trinity" never appears in the Bible. May be this doctrine was directly borrowed from Plato's idea of Trinity, that is Goodness, Wisdom and Power and the "Logos" of the Greek became the "Word" of St. John to convert the Greeks into Christian. Ingersoll rightly remarks: "Nothing ever was, nothing ever can be more perfectly idiotic and absurd than the dogma of the Trinity." (*Works* IV:267)

436. The Bible describes Father, Son and the Holy Ghost in different power and position. If all the three are one and one is three what is the need of describing them as three different entities?

437. If all the three were in the beginning how can we believe that there was nothing but God before the creation? So who, when and why created these three Gods in one? What were they doing since eternity before the creation?

438. How old are the three members of the Trinity i.e., the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost (Mt 29:19)? Can they be exchanged one for the other without any difficulty?

439. John opens his Gospel: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. If "Word" means Christ (1:14), then in the beginning was the Son (Christ), and the Son (Christ) was with Father (God), and the Son (Christ) was Father (God). Here we doubt, how can the son exist before the father and with the father and also be the father?

440. If Christ was God he would not have told: "My father is greater than I." According to Matthew and Luke Jesus was born a babe. But John and Paul say Jesus was pre-existent. How do we assimilate these contrary opinions?

441. If Jesus became the son of God after his birth then the concept of Trinity itself is erroneous. If he was the son of God before his birth it cannot be acceptable. Can a son be born with his father or before his father?

442. If Christ is the Son of God, there must have been a time when he did not exist. Can a son be as old as his father?

443. Did not Jesus cry on the cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" If Christ was God the cry would mean: "Me, Me, why hast Thou forsaken Me." It is said that Jesus withdrew on the Mount of Olivers and then he prayed. Then whom did he pray to? Being a God he must have been praying to Himself. The seventeenth century explorer of America, Hontan has rightly remarked on Jesus: "This God who makes God die to appease God."

444. Is not it a fact that the concept of Trinity is borrowed from India through the Egyptian mythology, where Oracle of Serapis used to reply long back, "First God, then the Word, and with them the Holy spirit"? Are all these of the same nature and make one whole, of which the power is eternal?

445. Is it not a rejection of Divinity when Jesus called himself the Son of Man?

446. Why did Jesus remain silent about baptism in the name of Holy Trinity except in Matthew (28:16)?

447. Why shall the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost not be forgiven (Mt 12:31,33)? Is it unpardonable?



BETWEEN SUNDAY AND SATURDAY

It is claimed that Sunday is the Sabbath day of God. Sabbath is mentioned in the New Testament fifty-nine times, and always with respect. Not a word is said anywhere in the New Testament about the Sabbath being abolished, done away, changed or anything of the kind. Christians, by what authority, use the Seventh Day for common labour? No Christian of the New Testament, either before or after the resurrection, ever did ordinary work upon the seventh day. Find one case of that kind, and we will yield the question. Why do the present Christians do it differently. Do they feel that God has given a Law which is of no significance? Please answer my questions :

448. Why keep the Sabbath Day? What is the objective of the Sabbath? When was it made, and for whom?

449. Did God start His work on Monday, the 1st January of year 1 or Saturday 1st January 1?

450. Is the Sabbath repudiated (Is 1:13; Rom 14:5; Col 2:16) or instituted (Ex 20:8)? If it is instituted the problem comes about the two sundays in every week, one in the West and the other in the East. That means did God take two days rest?

451. Did God command us to observe Saturday as Sabbath Day or Sunday? The scriptures and other references say that Saturday is the Jewish Sabbath while Sunday, the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath. Having once

demanded the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath how could God change it to the first day of the week ? God said: "My covenant I will not break" ? Is God then a liar, or is your Church wrong ? Or is it the impact of *Mithraism* to observe Sunday as the Sabbath?

452. The Sabbath appears as the day of God's rest in the finished creation (Gn 2:2,3). Is it not a fact that absolutely no mention of it is made again for 2,500 years? The Sabbath came to light only in *Exodus* (16:23) and was made part of the law.

453. When Jesus found the Sabbath filled with restrictions wasn't he himself held to be a Sabbath breaker? Then why did Jesus admonish his hearers to pray that their flight from Jerusalem should not be on the Sabbath day? (Mt 24:20)

454. Does the Bible say anywhere that the first day of the week commemorates the resurrection of Christ and Baptism commemorates the burial and resurrection of Jesus (Rom 6:3-5)? Does this tradition not contradict the law of God ? (Mt 15:1:9)

455. God threatens us not to work on the Sabbath day (Ex. 3:15). Is it possible today to be out of work one day a week? Ask it to a priest or to a doctor so that you can know that you disobey God at least one day in every week .

456. Is it a fact that the word Sunday never occurs in the Bible ? Neither God, His only son Christ, nor any inspired man ever said one word in favour of Sunday as a holy day ? Then why do you observe Sunday as a holy day and gather in the Church ?



WHERE JESUS WENT WRONG

After reading the *Sermon on the Mount* I found a gap between Jesus and his teaching. The language of the Sermon is simple enough to attract and exploit the uneducated fishermen of his time. His "blessed are the poor in spirit" remains a promise for the sake of promise and false security for heaven.

I do not understand when and how the mourn shall be comforted as I see millions and millions are mourning now and were mourning during Inquisition and Christian persecution. When I found the warlike races inherit the earth and make the meek slaves under their wide sword, I cannot justify Jesus saying " the meek shall inherit the earth."

When I read in the Bible that the Jews are the chosen people of God and Jesus claims himself to be a Jew and fights for a Jewish Kingdom where do the sinner, the wretched, the mourn and poor come into the picture in the Kingdom of Jesus ? But one thing I must admit here and that is, Jesus' greatness lies in his silence, but none of his church admits this. Jesus did not say that he was the second person of the Trinity. He did not say you must believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God, nor that you must repeat something and believe something !

Love Your Enemies

457. What did Jesus and his disciples preach ? They preached: Love your enemies, resist not evil and return good for evil and turn your other cheek. Did Jesus himself love his enemies at any time except doing this lip service ? Did Jesus

not denounce his enemies as white sepulchres, hypocrites and vipers? Instead, Confucius who had a better ethical sense said 600 years ago: "If you return good for evil, what will you return for good? Is it not better to return good for good, and justice for evil?"

458. Is his love for his enemies unconditional? Love your enemies means do not love them who do not love their enemies. Love your neighbour means do not love them who do not love their neighbour. What is so glorious about loving the enemies when Paul cunningly says: "It will heap burning coals on the enemy's head" (Rom 12:20)? Behind all act of charity if there is a guarantee of heavenly reward why not spend a few worldly dollars to reserve a seat in heaven permanently? Love has no selfishness. But Christian Love has an intention. Love with intention is no Love but a big business.

459. Is it not a fact that what Jesus taught has already been taught by earlier reformers? Does his "love thy neighbour" have anything to do with "neighbour" or the word "neighbour" refers to their fellow-believers? Were the Jews and Jesus both not hostile towards non-Jewish religions? Does not Jesus' "turn the other cheek" encourage vices and further violence?

460. How could Jesus, who commanded his people to love and pray for their enemies (Mt 5:44-45) and refused to call anybody in hurtful names, such as "Idiot" (Mt. 5:22), suddenly burst with anger and fury and shouted at his enemies with the words "Blind fools (Mt:23:17), "snakes," "sons of vipers!" (Mt 23:33) "brood snakes," "evil men" (Mt, 12:34)? Was he not hypocritical to the hypocrites of his time?

Message of War

461. Is it not a fact that Jesus who cried for loving his enemies declared: "Think not that I am come to send peace

on earth, I am come not to send peace, but a sword" (Mt 10:34-39; Lk 12:51; 21:16 ; see also Jn 14:27; Eph 2:14; 6:15; Col 1:10; Mt 24:9-13; 10:21-22; Mk 13:12)? As if it is such a glorious mission he came to this world for! Did he not follow Joshua who killed so many of the Canaanites when he conquered the Promised Land? Why did he not rather make friends with them and try to convert them to the true faith?

462. How does all of these bloodshed agree with the Sixth Commandment: Thou shalt not kill (Ex 20:13). Did not the early Christians too follow Joshua while converting heathen to their faith? This shows that nobody loves his enemies. Once we love our enemies they no longer remain enemy to us. So loving an enemy is absurd and a fallacy of language which Jesus used.

Dictator for the Disciples

463. Could Jesus be an ideal example of democracy, when like any other dictator he declared: "He that is not with me is against me" (Mt 12:30)? Could he be modest and humble when he stated that he was "greater than the temple" (Mt 12:6), "greater than Jonah" (Mt 12:41), and "greater than Solomon"? (Mt 12: 42)

464. Is it not the spirit of religious intolerance, as well as the severe limiting of the availability of salvation that makes Christianity a religion of race not the religion for the whole of mankind? If not, why did Jesus call the non-Jews "dogs" (Mt 15:26) and forbade his followers to preach among the Gentiles? Did he not say: The door to heaven is narrow, work hard to get in, for the truth is that many will try to enter but when the head of the house has locked the door, it will be too late. Then if you stand outside knocking, and pleading, Lord, open the door for us, he will reply, "I do not know you....You can't come in here, guilty as you are. Go away." And there will be great weeping and gnashing of teeth as you

stand outside... (Lk 13:24-25). Again did he not say: "If anyone publicly denies me, I will openly deny him before my Father in heaven (Mt 10:33)? He granted limited salvation and said to his disciples: "Those who believe and are baptized will be saved. But those who refuse to believe will be condemned" (Mk 16:16). When asked: "What should we do to satisfy God?" Jesus' only reply, according to John, was, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom He has sent." (6:28-29)

465. Can Jesus be generous enough to his friends or foes alike when John attributed to Jesus the following few lines: There is no eternal doom awaiting those who trust him to save them. But those who don't trust him have already been tried and condemned for not believing in the only Son of God? (Jn 3:18)

466. Did not the Father leave all judgement of sin to his Son, so that everyone will honor the Son, just as they honor the Father? But if you refuse to honor God's Son, whom he sent to you, then you are certainly not honoring the Father (Jn 5:22-23). So Jesus claimed: "No one can get to the Father except by means of me." (Jn 14:6)

467. In what respect is Jesus better than Buddha who was born more than five hundred years before Jesus? Buddha preached: "Do not accept what you hear by report, do not accept tradition, do not accept a statement because it is found in our books, nor because it is in accord with your belief, nor because it is the saying of your teacher... Be ye lamps unto yourselves... [E.A. Burtt, ed, *The Teaching of the Compassionate Buddha* (New York: Mentor Books, 1955: 49-50] When you know of yourselves: "These teachings are not good: these teachings when followed out and put in practice conduce to loss and suffering"—then reject them. [Quoted in F.L. Woodward, *Some Sayings of the Buddha*. London: Oxford University Press, 1939: 283] But Jesus has asked for unquestioning acceptance with no tolerance for disagreement

and poses himself as Master and Lord (Jn 13:13) teacher (Jn 13:14) and parent substitute. (Lk 14:26)

468. The message of Jesus in the words of John, is : "all who trust him—God's Son to save them have eternal life; those who don't believe and obey shall never see heaven, but the wrath of God remains upon them" (Jn 3:36). Jesus himself claimed: Anyone who wants to be my follower must love me...(Lk 14:26). With all the earnestness I have I say....if anyone breaks the least commandment, and teaches others to, he shall be the least in the kingdom of heaven (Mt 5:18-19). Anyone who isn't helping me is harming me (Mt 12:30). And of course you should obey their [the Jewish leaders' and Pharisee's] every whim !(Mt 23:3) I am the light of the world. So if you follow me, you won't be stumbling in the darkness.(Jn 8:12)

469. Is it a good sermon when Christ told us : "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn 15:14)? It clearly indicates that if you obey or follow the commands of Jesus only then you will be his friend. Do you need a friend who will always tell you to obey or follow his commands ?

470. If any one will not follow him he will send them to hell where there is eternal (Mt 25:41), never-ending fire (Mt 3:12) and furnace (Mt 13:42) in which there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30 13:28). Those who accepted Christ and his teachings became the first Christians. But for God's sake donot take Hell from their faith for which they became Christians. Take away hell and you take away their belief too.

Coward in Spirit

471. Is it practical to accept the advice of Jesus when he says: "I say unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do" (Lk 12:4). "Someone kills my body and he cannot kill me

anymore"-- is it a consolation to the soul or the sentiment of a coward ?

472. Jesus of Nazareth himself did actually have to face a situation in which he could have used force for his own defense. That was, of course, at Gethsemane, when he bade Peter sheathe the sword by means of which he might have defended the son of God.

Miracles or Myths

473. Can Christ be credited for his miracles ? Can God interfere with his own laws and admit the mistake in His original model ? To me miracle is a miracle if it is not understood. Explain us, it won't remain a miracle any more. We cannot believe the miracles of Jesus as true and those of Aesculapius, Apollonius of Tyana and many miracle-men of India ? If miracles have ceased to take place now why have they ceased ?

474. Is it necessary to believe that miracles are confined to the son of God when Jesus himself acknowledge that miracles can be performed by Satan too? (Lk 11:14-19; Mt 7:22-23)

Christian Economy

475. "Take no thought for the morrow (Mt 6:34), because God would take care of us all even of sparrows and snakes." What would you eat in winter if you don't prepare for it in summer ? So you have to plough, sow and cultivate or you have to starve. In spite of that Jesus instructs us : "Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on" (Lk 12:22). Can your doctor advise you like this ? If I suffer from malnutrition, I am supposed to take balanced diet. Can we lead a better life without planning for the future and eat what is available without caring for health ? It would be wiser for Jesus to advise : "Work hard. Use your money wisely. And save some for a rainy day, so you will not be a burden on others."

476. Is it not unchristian to possess wealth? Christ said in his Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the poor in spirit" and in Acts (2:45; 4:32) it is obviously said: "Their possessions and goods they sold and divided them all, according as everyone had need." Of course Christ had no home and no possessions. He did not live in a gorgeous palace and did not have a staff of servants to wait on him. He condemned wealth both in practice and teaching. He commanded the rich young man to sell all, and give it to the poor. Can a government be blamed then for confiscating the property of the Church and giving it back to the people? Because Jesus was poor so he did say "the poor shall inherit the earth", instead we find the rich inherit the Church.

477. You can not be a true Christian if you plan for the future (Mt 6:34), if you save money (Mt 6:19-20), become wealthy (Mk 10:21-25), if you do not sell everything and do not give it to the poor (Lk 12:23), if you work to obtain food (Jn 6:27), if you have sexual urges (Mt 5:28), if you take money from the poor and give it to the rich investor (Lk 19:23-26), if you get back your money from a thief (Lk 6:30), if you do not invite the person who hits you (Mt 5:39), if you question anyone who asks you for anything (Mt 5:42), and if you do not beat your slave (Lk 12:47). How can you be a proud Christian if you disobey these golden rules of life?

Bad Bargain

478. Is it wise to give one's cloak also to a thief when one's coat is stolen? Is it sensible to pluck one's eye out when there is slight defect in eye-sight? Is it not dangerous to advise somebody to cut off his hand because there is a boil in it?

Unjust Action

479. By changing water into wine at the wedding in Cana did Jesus not set a bad example to encourage the young people to be wine-bibbers?

480. Was it right for Christ to instruct his disciples to steal an ass or a mule (Mt 21:1; Jn 12:14) from any other house without permission?

481. Did not Christ go into the people's corn fields on the Sabbath and pluck corn, without permission?

482. Was it right and reasonable for Christ to get angry at the fig-tree and curse because it did not bear figs at an untimely season of the year?

483. Did not Christ take law into his own hand by whipping, beating, and scourging the money-changers and those who sold merchandise in the temple?

484. If Christ were God, he could not be guilty of an unjust action while casting devils out of a possessed man. Did he not listen to the devils and destroy the swines which were the property of an innocent man?

Anti-Parents

485. Should we desert our parents for the sake of eternal joy? Jesus bribed the children of the world who deserted their parents for a false happiness in heaven.

Jesus said: One must leave father and mother and take a wife (Mt 19:5). Is it in any way helpful for a happy home? Did he not consistently deny, ignore, and insult his family and the family of others through his teaching (Mt 19:29, 12:46-50; Mk 3:31 10:29; Lk 8:20, 9:59-62; 18:29)? In order to be a Christian should we renounce our parents?

486. Had Jesus led a family life he would not have rebuked his disciple who invited Jesus to his father's funeral with the cruel words: "Let the dead bury their dead", and would have never used such words for his own mother: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" (Jn 2:4)

Romantic Nonsense

487. In Luke (18:1-8) Jesus tells the parable of the judge and the nagging woman, illustrating our need for constant

prayer until the answer comes. But I read in Matthew (6:7) that we should not use "vain repetitions, as the heathen do : for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

488. Is it necessary to observe the Ten Commandments when in Romans (10:4) Paul says: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." So we see that we are no longer under the Jewish Ten Commandments Right ?

489. Can Jesus be our ideal ? Did he not attack merchants with a whip (Jn 2:15) being an angry young man of his time (Mk 3:5)? Did he not refuse to heal a sick child because he was a Gentile until Jesus was humbly requested many a times by the mother (Mt 15:22-28)? Did he show his respect for life by drowning innocent animals (Mt 8:32)?

490. Can mankind excuse Jesus for these words : "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth...and men gather them into fire, and they are burned," which influenced Torquemada to burn the unbelievers during the Inquisition ?

Between Words and Works

491. If Jesus and his Father are one (Jn 10:30) how is his Father greater than him ? (Jn 14:28)

492. When Jesus said that his father judgeth no man but has committed all judgement to him (Jn 22:30), how did he contradict himself and said: " I judge no man" (Jn 8:15), and bluntly said: "If any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not; for I come not to judge the world, but to save the world." (Jn12:47)

493. In one place Jesus said : "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I shall give you rest. Take my yoke upon you... for my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Mt 11:28-30). But in another place it is denied and said: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim 3:12), and this is confirmed when we read: "In this world ye shall have tribulation." (Jn 16:35)

494. If everyone that asketh, and he that seeketh, findeth (Mt 7:8) is true, how is it said that they shall call upon

me but I will not answer, they shall seek me early, but shall not find me ? (Pr 1:28)

495. When Jesus said: "Forgive your enemies," and "turn the other cheek," is he contradicting his father who said: "If anyone blasphemes, he must be stoned to death; also, if anyone kills or harms anyone else, an eye must be given for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life."? (Lv 24:16-22)

496. Repent sins and they will be forgiven (Lk 17:3) or in no case God will forgive our sins ? (Jos 24:19)

497. Jesus says if anyone calls another a "fool" he will go to Hell (Mt 5:21-23) whereas he himself breaks his own rules and calls them all fools. (Mt 23:17; Lk 11:40)

498. Jesus says if one will not listen, shake the dust of his house from your feet as a testimony against it. (Lk 9:5) And he graphically describes the horrors that will befall a town which doesn't listen (Lk 10:10), or in which a town refuses to listen; when the disciples begin to mutter imprecations against it as they had been told, Jesus rebukes them. (Lk 9:51)

499. When Jesus says no one comes to the Father except him (Jn 14:6) did he exclude Adam, Noah, Moses, Abraham, Melchiz'edek and Elijah who were long before Jesus ?

500. When Jesus says that it is sinful to swear by anything and let your yea be your yea, and your nay be your nay" (Mt 5:33,37), did he observe his own rules when he swears in the name of Heaven (Mt 23:17)? Is it not a fact that God swears by an oath (Heb 6:17), Jesus is sworn into priesthood by God (Heb 7:20), angel swears by God (Rev 10:6), and Joseph swears by his father's testicles ? (Gn 47:29)

501. Did Jesus say: "He who is not for me is against me" (Mt 12:30; Lk 11:23), or he says: "He who is not against me is for me" ? (Mk 9:40; Lk 9:49)

502. Did Jesus say few people will be saved (Lk 13:23) or most will go to Hell ? (Mt 7:13, 22:14; 7:21)

The Second Coming

503. Did Jesus describe his second coming and the ensuing Kingdom of God complete with many signs and miracles (Mt 24:29; Mk 13; Lk 21:10-28; 17:30-37) or he says the Kingdom of God is not coming with signs and miracles, but is now within ? (Lk 17:20)

504. Jesus explicitly states he will return to earth in the Second Coming within a few months at most : "Before the end of the present generation"... "many of you will not taste death before the Son of Man returns" (Mt 10:23; 16:28; 24:33-35; 1 Pet 4:7,1; Jn 2:18; Lk 9:27; Mk 9:1, 13:30). If so why did he confess again that he does not know when it will be (Mk 13:32)? Jesus seems to be careless about his saying and doing.

505. Can one believe Jesus who made his disciples await with the words: "Behold, I come quickly" ? (Rev 3:11) Does "quickly" mean 2000 years when he said: "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom ?" (Mt 16:28)

No More Evangelism

506. Does one have the right to eat, if one does not work and wander around preaching like Jesus (2 Thes 3:6-13)? Does Paul contradict evangelism when he says to live quietly and work with your hands ? (1 Thes 4:11)

507. Is not it a fact that when Jesus preached brotherly love and forgiveness he did not mind to prohibit strictly his disciples from going to the Samaritans and Gentiles ?

508. Whether the Bible asks : Go out and preach the gospel; make everybody listen; grab them by the lapels (2 Tim 4:2) or it says do not preach; there are too many preaching already, and everyone is getting confused (Jas 3:1)? Is it not a fact that Jesus condemns most preachers (Mk 12:38) and the Holy Spirit forbids the preaching of Christianity in Asia too ? (Acts 16:6)



THE GREAT WHORE

The Roman Catholic Church which was born and brought up in Rome claims Pope to be the lawful successor of St. Peter. If at all Peter was in Rome and he fixed his episcopal chair in that city then why is New Testament silent about it, except a reference: "The Church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you" (1 Pet 5:13). Does this line suggest Peter to be at Rome at anytime, because Babylon was in Chaldes.

Is Peter Pope ?

509. Is the first Pope of Rome the lawful successor of St. Peter ? Does the recent discovery of the tomb of St. Peter in Rome give any indication that St. Peter was ever in Rome ? If he was ever the Bishop of Rome why did Paul not mention his name while writing to the Romans ?

510. If Peter was appointed Vicar of Christ before he became the Bishop of Rome why did his successors first become Bishop of Rome before they became Vicars of Christ ?

Rock Versus Peter

511. When Matthew quotes : "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I'll build my Church." (Mt 16:18) What did "rock" refer to -- Peter or Peter's faith in Christ ? Is it the language of God, or is it a riddle of the Seigneur des Accords ? (Ethienne Tabourot, sixteenth-century author of collections of riddles)

512. Can "rock" be referred to Peter, when the original Latin "Petros" is used as proper noun for Peter and "Petra" is used as common noun for rock ?

513. If Peter is called the *rock* upon which Jesus wanted to build his Church why did Jesus tell Peter: "Get thee behind me, Satan.. thou savorest not the things of God, but those that be a man" (Mk 8:33)? If you take the promise literally, why not take it literally that Peter was Satan too ? Peter himself proved it by denying Christ thrice when Christ was in danger ?

514. Are the words: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church", a later addition in St. Matthew for the interest of an ecclesiasticism anxious to discipline those who disputed its claims ? If it was not a later addition why did St. Mark omit these important words ?

515. If Peter was the rock, and had the supremacy, why did the question rise at all as to which of the Apostles would be the greater (Mt 28:18-20)? Does it not show that all the Apostles were equal and all the names of the 12 Apostles were written on the wall of New Jerusalem which had 12 foundations ? (Acts 1:15-26)

516. When Christ called himself the chief corner stone (Eph 11:19-20) what is the need of our Lord to build his church on a mere man, no matter how good he was ?

Why Peter ?

517. If Peter was supreme why didn't he appoint Matthias by himself, instead of joining with the other Apostles in electing him (Acts 1:15-26)? If he was the supreme how could the Apostles send him on a mission ?

518. Does not Paul say that he had the charge of the Gentiles, while Peter was for the Jews (Gal 2:7)? Does it not break the universal supremacy of Peter ?

519. Can we deny the fact that there were seven Churches in Asia Minor and Rome had one? If we are to decide the Supreme Bishop in the early Church then can one avoid St. James, the Bishop of Jerusalem, who was a leader and who presided over the Council of Jerusalem as recorded in Acts XV in the presence of Peter?

Pope the Father and the Son

520. Did not Christ say that Satan was the Prince of this world? If it is so can Pope escape from being a monarch?

521. When Pope Marcellinus died in 304 AD the Chair of Peter was vacant for over three years. Where is the unbroken line of Popes from Peter to Pius XII?

522. Does not the name of Benedict IX appear three times due to the confused events during his reign?

523. Were Sylvester III, Gregory VI, and Clement II anti-Pope, or rival claimants to the Papacy?

524. Is it not a fact that St. John in *Revelations* calls Rome the Babylon of sin and the number 666 the numerical equivalent of the Latin words of the Pope's title, Vicarius Filii Dei and the "Scarlet Woman" mean the Papacy?

525. Did Pope Nicholas I say that he was God, so he can not be judged by man? Did Pope John XXII say that it is heresy to deny the power of "Our Lord God the Pope"? (Extravagantes: Roman Canon Law)

526. Is it not a blasphemous claim of Pope Pius X that he was "Jesus Christ hidden under the veil of the flesh"?

Rituals of Romantics

527. Does not the Catholic Church teach that grace is usually given through the Sacraments?

528. Why does your Church ring bells at daybreak, noon and sunset ? What do the three time, and nine bells signify ?

529. Why do the Christians eat bread and drink wine thinking bread to be the flesh and wine as the blood of Christ ? Can bread still remain bread after the Consecration ? Is there any trace of Christ's body in the bread ?

530. Don't you pray to Mary at every evening devotion ? Can you cite examples from the Bible where Mary is to be worshipped in the same way as Christ ?

531. Christ offered the Last Supper in the evening. Why do you not have Mass in the evening instead of morning ?

532. On what authority your church make saints ? Why do you worship relics of saints and pray to them ? Is it not better to pray to God directly ?

533. Why do you call your Priest "Father", though Christ said: "Call no man your father upon earth" ? (Mt 23:9)

534. Why do you emphasise priesthood when the Apostles did not claim to be priests ? Is not the New Testament silent about priest but uses words like pastors, evangelists, teachers, apostles, prophets, bishops, presbyters and deacons ?

535. Did not Christ say: "Beware of the scribes who desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the Synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; who devour widows' Houses, and for a show make long prayers ? (Lk 20:46)

536. Is there any priestly or sacerdotal order in the Church ? Does not Paul say that there is only one "Mediator between God and man" ? (1 Tim 2:5)

537. Is it not the violation of the Second Commandment of God when we decorate churches with images and statues ? Is it not Catholic catechism which refers to taking the name of God

in vain, omitting the references to images ? Did not God forbid us to worship plaster statues as you do ? Is not worshipping Mary or Madonna, also a sort of idolatry ? Why do you send missionaries to convert heathens who do the same thing ?

538. Why do you take holy water in the church ? Can a priest make water holy and that water conveys the blessings ? Was not the holy water invented by St. Justin Martyr during the second century ?

539. Is it not amusing to see Catholics who superstitiously cross themselves before beginning their prayers ?

540. Don't you have laws enjoining celibacy on the clergy, regulating marriage, forbidding meat on Fridays, obliging attendance at Mass on Sundays, compelling the reception of Communion and Confession at least once a year, prohibiting Catholics from being communists, atheists and many other such laws ?

541. Was not Christ poor enough to lay his head, had no magnificent edifice to preach in, rather always spoke in open air ? Does not your church spend a million dollars on a Cathedral, keep the Pope in a great palace, own immense wealth, celebrate ceremonies full of pomp and display, enjoy luxury and ease ? When your ordinary priests use motor cars why do they forget that Jesus always used to walk ?

542. Is there any reason to believe that angels have the physical ability of an acrobat ?

543. Who hears the Confession of the Pope ? Did not St. Augustine warn priests that the hearing of Confessions is dangerous to virtue ?

Marriage of Bishops

544. Did not St. Paul say that a Bishop must be the husband of one wife (I Tim 3:2) and "forbidding to marry" is given as one of the signs of false churches ?

545. Is it not a fact that the earlier French kings were granted by the Popes to divorce from valid marriages ? Was not Napoleon's marriage and divorce to Josephine and second marriage to Marie Louise of Austria performed by a Catholic priest in a Catholic Church ?

546. Can you say no to the Most Rev. Dr. Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury who, in 1952 told the British Royal Commission on Marriage and Divorce that the Roman Catholic Church can disregard, for its own purposes, previous marriages and divorces of persons joining that Church ?

Popes and Politics

547. Does not the Roman Catholic Church suffer from a chronic power-complex ? It dispenses a man in war time from the commandment: "Thou shall not kill"; it dispenses a man from the commandment: "Thou shall not steal" in times of grave necessity; it violated the law "Love thine enemy," at the time of crusade ?

548. Did not Pope Pius XII bless General Franco of Spain with the words: "my beloved sons who bring to the heart of your Father an immense consolation because you have been defending the faith and the civilisation of your century" who mercilessly massacred millions of people?

549. If your Church is not political, why did Pope Pius XI make a political treaty with Mussolini in 1929 to gain Fascist recognition of Vatican City ?

550. If the Vatican was politically neutral , why in 1942 did Roberto Farinacci have to complain, in the "Regime Fascista," that representatives of all Italy's enemies were staying at Vatican City, including a clique of Jews ?

551. Had not Hitler planned with the Pope for a world-domination ? If the Pope had no political sympathies with Hitler, why did he send him a telegram of congratulation when he escaped assassination ?

552. Is it not strange that the Pope never uttered a word against the Fascist leaders—Mussoline, France, Salazar and Hitler—who were all favorites of the Vatican ?

553. Is it not a fact that one Pope (Alexander II) gave England to William of Normandy and another Pope (Sixtus V) gave England to Spain and yet another Pope (Alexander VI) gave America to Spain without caring for the feelings and sentiments of the people ?

554. Did the Catholic Church protest against the massacre of Huguenots on St. Bartholomew's Day, Aug.23,1572 ?

555. Who can excuse the Catholic king Philip of Spain who signed death sentence for the whole 3,000,000 people of the Netherlands as heretics, in 1568 which was the most stupendous death warrant in history ?

Crime of the Popes

556. Had not the Roman Church been a hot-bed of vices, murder, trickery, violence and oppression ? Was not Gregory the Great of sixth century an unscrupulous despot and a notorious profligate ?

557. Was not John XII of tenth century a gambler, debauchee, murderer who turned the Vatican into a brothel ?

558. Can you deny the fact that John XXIII of fifteenth century was proved to have been guilty of seventy different kinds of crime, among which were sodomy, rape, murder and having illicit intercourse with over three hundred nuns ?

559. Was not Pope Benedict IX but a boy of eleven when he was made Pope; and did he not disgrace himself by every form of vices ?

560. Was not Pope Stephen VII expelled for immorality, imprisoned and strangled ?

561. In view of the law of celibacy, how do you account for such an immoral scoundrel as Pope John X ?

562. Pope Leo X, sold indulgences in Germany to get money for St. Peter. Do you think it right to sell pardons for sins ?

563. Was not Cardinal Radrigo Borgia, later known as Pope Alexander VI one of the most evil men, a Satan pretending to be an Angel of light who seduced his own daughter and was the father of many illegitimate children ? Is that the reason for which Cardinal Newman lost faith in the Catholic Church before he died and Henry VIII suppressed monasteries and converts thinking it immoral ? Is that the reason for which many Popes died violent deaths ? Did not the Roman Church, by its corruption, forfeit its right to be the true church, so that Protestant Churches had to be established in its place ?

564. Should church not be ashamed of such Popes who burnt alive great freethinkers like John Huss, Joan of Arc, Latimer, Savonarola and Giordano Bruno, and many more ? Is it the reason for which the author Graham Greene accepted the truth that a Catholic is more capable of doing evil than anyone else ?

565. St. Thomas taught that the heretics should be put to death. Did Torquemada in his grand Spanish inquisition not burn 8,800 persons through eighteen years ?

566. Did Pope not honour the Duke of Alva for slaughtering 18,000 heretics ?

567. Did not Pope Pius VII in 1816 denounce Bible Societies as a crafty device by which the very foundation of religion was undermined and Pope Pius VIII, Leo XIII and Pius IX too warned the protestant Bible Societies ?

568. Is not it a fact that before Reformation Catholic Church burnt all Bibles and punished those who had copies of it ? Does not reading Bible in the vernacular forbidden and in 1713 Pope Clement XI condemned the idea that Bible reading is for all ?

Science and Salvation

569. Why did the church attack Copernicus, condemn Galileo and burn Bruno? Is it because they said the earth revolved around the sun? Did the Pope not pronounce their theories as damnable heresy? Has not the church digressed from spiritual matters to matters which did not concern her? How does an infallible church approve of such sciences to-day after bitterly opposing them in the past?

570. Is not it a fact that in 1948, Pope Pius XII told a gathering of surgeons from 32 countries that they could not kill an unborn child directly, even in order to save a mother's life?

571. Can we deny the fact that the Catholic Church from the third to the sixth century was decidedly hostile towards philosophy and science?

572. Did not Bishop Theophilus in 390 AD destroy one of the libraries of Alexandria? Was not Hypatia, the daughter of Theon the astronomer and herself a teacher of mathematics, brutally murdered in the same city by Christian fanatics in 415 AD? Had not in 529 AD Emperor Justinian closed all philosophical seminaries? So Professor A. Wolf, of the University of London, in his book, *An Outline of the Modern Knowledge*, says: "The first great period in the history of human thought thus came to an end, leaving the West to darkness." If theology is the science of God, science should be the theology of God. But it is strange that theologians were prosecuting the scientists. That shows that theology is an arrant prejudice and a sort of art of enlightened ignorance, which was drafted centuries ago.

Church for the Romans

573. Can you escape the fact that the Catholic Church is the kingdom of God in this world, although Christ said that his kingdom was not in this world? So in the lifetime of St. John, did not Jesus find it necessary to rebuke the Seven Churches in Asia for their error (Rev 1-3)? If Christ died for

all, did he say that we must all be Catholics ? Does not more Catholics mean more revenue ?

574. Despite all you have said, yours is the "Roman Catholic Church." The name of Rome is included in your own official title. In the 'Constitutio Dogmatica de Fide Catholica' passed at the Third Session of the Vatican Council on April 24, 1870, the title is given: "Sancta Catholica Apostolica Romana Ecclesia"—"The Holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church." When less non-Italian than Italian cardinals are in power to elect the Pope, the Pope automatically and obviously will be an Italian Pope. Have you any right to drop the word "Roman" ? Is not your Church by the Romans, for the Romans and of the Romans ?

575. Can you deny the fact that your Bishops of Spain on May 28th, 1948 issued a United Declaration which said : "Freedom of religion is an evil," and the Pope Pius IX condemned liberty of conscience ?

576. Is it true that, when the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" was drawn up by a Committee appointed by the United Nations Organization, the Roman Catholic delegates did not want the attitude of their Church to support religious freedom ?

577. Is it not a fact that the Catholic Church has its strongholds in Spain, Italy, France, Portugal and other countries where the living conditions are of a low standard and the people are notoriously superstitious ? Why is Southern Ireland so poor ? Is it for want of ability, or is it because the Catholic Church has robbed the people of all their money ? What a contrast with North of Ireland ! Mexico had the free scope of the Catholic Church and her people are illiterate. In Europe I found glorious Cathedrals and pitiable poverty side by side. That may be the reason for which Father Martindale was bewailed by the fact that the Catholic religion was looked upon as the religion of the kitchen. In comparison to these countries, look at England's progress since she has become Protestant !

NON-CATHOLIC CREEDS IN THE CATHOLIC WORLD

When Jesus said: "I will build my church" (Mt 16:18), did he refer to "Churches," "Denominations," or "Sects"? If he meant *churches* he would not have said that the gates of hell would not prevail against the church. The English word *church* is translated from the Greek word *ekklesia*, means "called out ones" —from *ek* (out) and *klesia* (called). The Greek word means "a calling out" to meet together. It does not mean a building with sharply sloping roof, with a steeple atop pointing to heaven, with a cross on its top.

"Called out ones" to meet together, does not refer to a church as we mean in English. During the time of Jesus the word *Church* was unknown and the words such as "Qahat," "Synagogue," or "Ecclesia" were not used as its substitute.

For the first time such "called out ones" met in the day of Pentecost in 31 AD. The meeting was confined to 12 apostles and 120 disciples. From the book of *Revelation* we could know about the seven churches started at Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatire, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea in Asia Minor from the letters issued to them. Besides, there were many different and independent churches in early period, one at Antioch, one at Jerusalem, one at Constantinople, one at Rome, one at Alexandria and in later period in England, Scotland and the U.S.A.

In course of times, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy appeared and quoted the letters of Paul in

their own way. Consequently one Christ and one Bible could create hundreds and thousands of denominations such as Roman Catholicism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism, Arianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, Greek Orthodoxy and Protestantism and then Protestantism was sub-divided into Baptists, Christian Scientists, Congregationalists, Disciples of Christ, Eastern Orthodox, Episcopalians, Jehovah's Witnesses, Lutherans, Methodists, Mormons, Presbyterians. Quakers, Seven-day Adventists, Unitarians etc.

In this way the concept of church grew long after the death of Jesus. Jesus himself was an open air speaker and never dreamt of any magnificent edifice to preach in. That may be the reason why there was no Head of the Church for the first three hundred years.

What is the need of such Churches if Christ died for all -- and we are sure that he did not die for a particular Church or a particular person? The unity of the Churches, the ecumenical movement, is an offshoot of the notorious mind. This is the outcome of the Paulian Churchianity that is visible today among the gentiles. One ought to know that St. Paul who never met Christ, nor heard any sermon delivered by him, is an ideal example for the Church. It is not the words about God that divided mankind but the interpretations which give birth to new creeds and new sects in Christianity. When a Catholic reads: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church," he means it is the divine appointment of the first Pope by Jesus himself. So Peter became Pope who established the Catholic Church. But to a Protestant "rock" is the rock of faith, nothing more or nothing less than this meaning.

When Jesus said: "This is my flesh, and this is my blood," the Catholics turned it to bread and wine that represents flesh and blood of Jesus, whereas the Baptists do not take it in its literal sense but think it to be spoken poetically. Similarly

the word "Baptised" means nothing for a Methodist but everything to a Baptist. When an ordinary Christian reads: "speak in tongues and cast out demons," it has little meaning to them then to a Pentecostal. Here are a few questions relating to the non-Catholic sects and their creeds. If they claim their Church is not Churchianity let them answer from the Bible:

Division Within

578. Can *Revelation* be the revelation of God when St. John has divided the house of Christianity one against the other, Protestants against the Roman Catholics? Where is the sweet concord, brotherhood and unity that Christianity professes to establish? (Rev 2:20; 21; 9:21; 14:8; 17:1-5, 15-16; 18:3; 19:2)

579. Is not it a fact that Christ commands us to search the scriptures (Jn 5:39) and the early Christians searched the scriptures daily (Act 17:11)? Why do the present Christians deny to interpret the Bible at a subjective level and compel us to accept the interpretations given by church without posing any doubt?

580. Is there any need to join a Church in order to be saved? Bible says: "Whosoever believeth in him will not perish, but will have life everlasting." (Jn 3:15)

581. Can you deny the fact that since Christ forbade divisions in the Church every Christian Church is a branch of the Catholic Church and Protestant Churches are but offshoots of the same Roman Catholic Church which they condemn?

Pentecostal

582. If tongues are given as a *via media* by which the sudden influx of supernatural inspiration is passed on, how did Paul warn the people to keep silence because their use of tongue will mislead and make them uncertain (1 Cor 14:7-8); again it is useless like speaking into the air (9);

barbarous (11); and it is childish (19-20); and it is mad thing to do ? (23)

583. Are you practising tongue in accordance with the Commandments of the Lord ? (Mk 16:15-16; Acts 2:4-8; 10:14-46; 19:6; 1 Cor 13:10, 28; 12:8-110)

584. Does not Paul *edify* the church by a right use of gifts (1 Cor 14) and qualify the use of gift by saying: "If any man speak in a tongue let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by turn and let one interpret ? (1 Cor 27)

585. Donot answer these questions to me rather you put them to yourself. Do you use Tongues as a sign to believers or unbelievers ?

- Do you teach that your people should desire rather to prophesy ?
- Do your people pray that they may interpret ?
- Do you speak in "Mysteries" ?
- Do only two or at the most three speak in Tongues at your meetings ?
- Do you speak in turn or simultaneously ?
- Do you impose silence if there is no interpreter ?
- Do you pray in Tongues without interpretations in the Church ?
- Do your women keep silence in the Church ?
- Do you acknowledge that the commandments of 1 Cor14 are the commandments of the Lord ?
- Are all things at your meetings done decently and in order ?
- Why do you so often speak of our Lord as simply "Jesus" ? (See 1 Cor12:30; Acts 2:36)

586. Can it be called prayer when you talk to God ? When God talks back is it not schizophrenia ?

Baptist

587. Is it proper to call John the Baptist the founder of the Baptist Church? Did not John tell that his preaching was essentially a preparation for Christ? Did not he tell his followers not to remain his disciples, but to become disciples of Christ? Did not the Apostles baptize those who had received only John's baptism again in the name of Christ?

588. Is it not a fact that the first traces of the Baptist appeared in 1521 by a certain Thomas Munzer who taught that one who had been baptized as an infant was not really baptised at all and therefore had to be baptised again? Were not John Smyth and Thomas Helwys the first English Baptists; and the first Baptist Chapel commenced in London in 1611? Had John Smyth not been an Anglican minister prior to his becoming a Baptist?

Seventh-Day Adventist

589. Can we deny the fact that Seventh-Day Adventism, Christian Science, and Theosophy have one thing in common that they all had hysterical, neurotic women as their Founders?

590. The Adventists claim that Jesus had said about their Church, when he promised: "I will build my Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." His true Church must have been founded by him personally, and it could never go wrong. But who commenced the Seventh-Day Adventists, and when? Certainly Christ did not establish that sect. It began in the 19th century, 19th century is too late to be the work of Christ. Is not the Seventh-Day Adventists simply an offshoot of the Millerites, the followers of William Miller who began to give his religious ideas to the world in 1831?

591. Could William Miller become successful in forecasting the second coming or Advent of Christ as a founder of the Adventist? In 1831 he believed he had discovered that the Second Advent of Christ was due in October, 1843. When Miller's prediction failed in 1843, he declared that Christ would

come in the spring of 1844. When the end of the world did not come then, Miller apologized to his followers for the mistake in his calculations, and told them that the end would come in the autumn of 1844 to be precise, on October 22nd of that year. When that date failed, Miller washed his hands of the whole movement and admitted that he was wrong. Is it not a fact that to save Miller and to consolidate the movement from such a grave mistake Mrs Ellen G White, a prophetess added the Seventh-Day or Saturday concept?

592. Does not the Adventist deny the Biblical doctrine of the Atoning sacrifice of Christ as the only means of man's salvation?

593. Is not it a fact that the Adventist deny the finality of the work of Christ on the Cross, hence it makes Christ's last cry on the cross: "It is finished," a lie?

594. Does not the Adventist declare Satan to be the joint sin-bearer, and the *vicarious* substitutes of the sinner?

595. Does not the Adventist teach that Christ inherited a sinful, fallen nature?

596. Do the Adventists not believe in soul-sleep of the death and conditional immortality?

Christian Science

597. Is it not unchristian and unscientific nonsense for Mrs Eddy to think that matter is an erroneous belief of mortal mind?

598. If pain and suffering are not realities does Christian Science not tell us that you are trying to solve a problem which does not exist at all?

599. If miraculous healing is a divine intervention can it be confined to Christian religion? Can a universal God interfere in the normal routine of the world He has created?

600. If prayer can cure why do the Popes and Paul, Saints and Penticostals die?

Jehovah's Witnesses

601. Rutherford uses the term "Jehovah" for God. Is not the word "Jehovah" an English misspelling for "Jahveh" or "Yahweh," the Hebrew word for God? As the Muslims say: "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is His prophet," so the Witnesses of Jehovah believe that there is no God but Jehovah, and that Rutherford is His prophet.

602. Are the Witnesses of Jehovah an offshoot of the Russellites? Was not Pastor Charles T Russell an unbalanced religious man who centered entirely on the thought that Christ was not the son of God?

603. Was Russell not making money by selling what he called "Miracle Wheat" at sixty dollars a bushel to credulous farmers, the fraud being eventually stopped by the Federal authorities, who made him refund the money?

604. Can we believe Pastor Russell's doctrine that Millennium of 1000 years of reign by Christ started invisibly in 1874? Is it not a romantic nonsense to believe that at the end of the Millennium this earth will be turned into a vast garden of Eden?

605. Did God hand over the charges of this world to Christ in 1914? Has the war between Christ and the good angels; and Satan and his evil gang started in heaven? Rutherford seems to forget to tell how Satan got back into heaven. Is he not confused regarding the date of the First World War?

606. Is it not a fact that Charles Russell had taught that Christ's invisible return would happen in 1874, but later changed the date to 1914?

607. Who are these 144,000 faithful and discreet slaves (Mt 24 :45)? Can they be called the bride of Christ out of which 6,000 were chosen in the first century?

608. Is Armagedden just around the corner? Has it occurred in 1914, 1918, 1925, 1941 or in 1975 or it began in 1914?

Church of Christ

609. Is not the Church of Christ simply called "Bible Christians" because they say that people must be Christians, but they do not state what Christians must believe?

Mormon

610. Did not Joseph Smith, the prophet for the Mormons by the help of Sidney Rigdon, a disappointed Baptist minister, hatch up a story in his room at midnight and used his dream like Joseph and Mary?

Christadelphians

611. Is it not a fact that John Thomas the founder of Christadelphians popularly known as "Brethren of Christ" predicted that Christ would return in 1910?

612. Did he not preach that the doctrine of the Trinity is erroneous; that Christ was a prophet but not the Son of God; that man has not an immortal soul but just ceases utterly to exist at death? The Christadelphian will be restored to life in this world and live forever on earth when Christ returns to be King of this world with His headquarters at Jerusalem?

Masons

613. Is it not ridiculous when A. Churchward, in the *Treasury of Masonic Thought*, in the chapter on the "Great Pyramid," says: "Masonry goes back 300,000 years before Christ to the Egyptian mysteries of Horus?" Is it not an extravagant claim to connecting Masonry with the Solomon's temple?

614. If God is the Universal Father and Christ is the Universal Brother for mankind why are the Masons bound to belong to a secret society and bound to secrecy by a code?

Ecumenical Movement

615. When Jesus prayed that they also may be one in us (Jn 17:21) did he pray for organizational unity or spiritual unity? The Jehovah's Witnesses believes Jehovah's theocratic organization, so does the Roman Catholic church.

616. In the 1940s and 1950s, hundreds of Christians died in Rome, Colombia and South America, whose only effort was to keep unity among the Christians. How do the contradictory doctrines and denominations go hand in hand? How can the two walk together, except they be agreed? (Amos 3:3)



WHAT I MUST DO TO BE SAVED

The word "Immortal" is used only once in the Holy Bible, that too for God alone (I Tim 1:17), whereas "Immortality" appears five times, but nowhere for the human soul (Rom 2:7; I Cor 15: 53-54; I Tim 6:16 and II Tim) which repeatedly reminds us that we are mortal i.e, we are subjective to death as the penalty of sin.

The early Churchians adopted the concept of the immortality of soul from the Egyptians, Babylonians and the Greek philosophers like Herodotus, Socrates and Plato who instead have borrowed the term and concept from India. The early church fathers like Justin, Origen, Tertullian have unhesitatingly admitted that this concept of the immortality of soul was quite alien to the biblical writers (*Defence, Proposition No. 27*) so Luther held that the soul died with the body, and that God would hereafter raise both the one and the other. Making his views more precise and obvious Luther writes:

It is probable, in my opinion, that, with very few exceptions, indeed, the dead sleep in utter insensibility till the day of judgment. ... On what authority can it be said that the souls of the dead may not sleep in the same way that living pass in profound slumber the interval between their downlying at night and their uprising in the morning? (From Michelet's *Life of Luther*, Bohn's edition, - :133)

Leaving no theologians to confusion Willam Tyndale, the printer of the first New Testament in English and another of the Reformers, wrote: "In putting departed souls in heaven, hell, or purgatory you destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection... The true faith putteth the resurrection; the heathen philosophers, denying that, did put that souls did ever live... If the soul be in heaven, tell me what cause is there for the resurrection?"

If the soul is not immortal and it dies what is the need for the soul to seek salvation and believe in a lie that comes from the lips of our pastors. I am very skeptical about the concept of salvation as described in the Holy Bible, though Gideon was more skeptical than me, demanding two signs (Jdg 6:36-40) when one sign was enough to believe.

Christ commanded us to search the scriptures (Jn 5:39) and the early Christians searched the scriptures daily (Acts 17:11). In spite of our seriously searching the scripture, salvation remains a confused concept and it begets multiple questions. These genuine doubts are left for your consideration in the form of questions:

Immortality of Soul

617. Could you answer what exactly you mean by salvation? Is it a place, a goal, a condition or a reward?

618. Whether everyone will eventually be saved (Jn 12:32; Rom 5:18; 11:32; 1 Cor-15:22; Col 1:20; 1 Tim 2:4, 6; 1 Jn 2:2) or a very few will get saved? (Mt 7:13-14, Lk 13:23-24)

619. Whether salvation is completely predestined by God (Ps; 65:4; Pr 16:9, 20:24; Is 46:9-11; Je 10:23; Jn 6:44, 64-65; 15:16; Acts 15:18; Rom 8:28-30; 9:18; Eph 1:4-5, 11; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2; Rev 13:8, 17:8) or it is by human free will? (Jas 2:14-26; Rom 2:5-7, 10)

620. Is it necessary to believe in God and that too, that He has a son? Without such a belief is everlasting life

possible ? (Jn 3:36; 3:15-16; 6:40, 47; 11:25; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9; 1John 5:12)

621. Is repentance a part of salvation (Lk 13:3, 5)? If God has already paid mankind's (sin) debt is it necessary for every one of us to repent for the sin we have committed to obtain salvation ?

622. If wages of sin is death and the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ (Rom 6:23), immortality of soul or eternity of life has no meaning for a born-again Christian.

623. If Christ has paid the price of my sin I should not die. But when the believers are dying every now and then how can I be immortal ?

624. St. Paul tells us that Jesus alone hath immortality (1 Tim 6:16). If so, how was Lazarus brought back to life by Jesus when he was dead and his soul did not survive ? If his soul had survived, why could he not tell us what things were like after death ?

625. Was immortality unknown to the Jews and their Pentateuch so the concept was rejected by the Sadducees ?

626. Is there any thing like everlasting salvation (Is 45:7) like everlasting happiness ? Man's ability is limited which does not befit a man for any everlasting condition. Even God does not like everlasting happiness and created a troublesome world for a change.

Eternal Hell and Heaven

627. Do you think a person is so bad that he deserves eternal punishment ? Is it wise to send Judas and Adam to hell whereas the soul of a still-born child remains in heaven ?

628. Is it not ridiculous to think that a small boy commits his first mortal sin and dies unrepenting next day and goes to hell, whereas an old person after a lifetime of sin finally repents and enjoys heaven ?

629. Is there any place like hell and heaven outside the world? If there is hell, it is not God's purgatory but a designation, a place paved with the tongues of theologians? If there is heaven beyond earth where the elected Christians go and sing for God is it not a Coney Island of the Christian imagination?

630. If God sends so many kinds of plague and diseases to sinners and punish them (Gn 38:34; Lk 20:14; 21:9) by hanging (Gn 40:22) scourging (Lev 19:20), stoning (Lev 20:2), beheading (2Ki 6:13), crucifying (Mt 20:19) and burning (Lev 20:14; 21:9), what punishment is left for God to take a soul to the so called hell?

631. If on the judgement day we will get our reward or punishment why does mankind suffer before it? What may be the cause of our suffering or happiness before the judgement day?

632. Is there any sin so serious as to send a sinner to hell and a believer to heaven? No action of the soul is so good as to make it fit for an everlasting heaven or so bad which throws a soul into an everlasting hell. Man is not free in God's world. If I am free, why was I not given any choice as to whether I should exist or not? -

633. Why does a forgiving and merciful God allow anyone to go to Hell when He can create endless space in Heaven?

634. Will not heaven be monotonous - to live with God for ever and exist with no hope for change? It is said in Christian heaven that the lion and the calf shall lie down together. Can the calf get sound sleep?

635. Why make people afraid of such a horrible place called purgatory, when you know that it does not exist? Is not this dogma invented by Pope Gregory in 600 AD, and he made it an article of faith by the Council of Florence in 1439?

636. Christian heaven means enjoying heaven of never-ending sunday afternoons without a body. What shall I profit if I loose my body and gain the spirit to enjoy heaven? Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274) the Roman Catholic father was once asked what would be his greatest joy in heaven, and he replied: "To stand at the parapet walls looking down into the pits of hell and watch the writhings and hear the agonies of the damned." Can I be happy to peep and watch my kith and kin cooked in eternal frying pans?

Mustard Seed of Faith

637. It is said that any soul which has faith even equal to a grain of mustard seed and says to a tree or to a mountain to move from one place to another, it shall obey him (Lk 17:6; Mk 11:23). Can a single Christian in the whole world claim to possess that little Faith in Christ? Without a little faith in Christ how can they claim to be Christian?

638. What must we do to be saved? Bible says one must be born again (Jn3:3), obey the Ten commandments (Mk 10:19), must believe and do all that Jesus has said (Jn 12:48; 5:24; 6:28; 8:51; Jn 2:4), must give away everything and dedicate his life to preaching the Gospel (Mk 10:17; 10:21), eat the flesh of Jesus and drink his blood regularly (Jn 6:53), believe Jesus shall cast out devils (Lk 4:33-41), speak new tongues, take up serpents, can drink deadly things and be not hurt and remove sickness by laying hands (Mk 16:16-18). Can a believer of Christ show such an exhibition and pass the test? Are we to be punished because we donot believe these things which we cannot believe? Now it appears that no person today do actually believe all that is said in the Bible.

639. Is Salvation through Faith in any way justifiable? If a sinner by confessing his sin is saved for his faith in Christ, what is the need of doing good? Is not it a wrong process to secure heaven through faith alone? But what will

God do to those who haven't heard of his son? Will he punish the deaf for not having listened to him?

640. Paul and James seem to be in complete disagreement with regard to salvation by faith or by work (Rom 4:13-22; Jas 2:18-26). Paul advocates faith as a prerequisite for salvation whereas James believes that by good deed one can get salvation. But did not Peter champion salvation through work prescribed by the Jewish Law?

Why Baptism

641. Is not it a fact that the belief system for salvation in Christianity is not confined to call upon the Lord, or believe in Jesus as the only son of God or repent and perform good deeds but be born of water and of the Spirit (Jn 3:5); eat Jesus's flesh and drink his blood (Jn 6:53); receive the kingdom of God as a little child (Mk 10:15); believe that God rewards everyone who diligently seeks Him? (Heb 11:6)

642. Is baptism necessary for our salvation? How many times baptism is necessary for a born-again Christian? *Hebrews* (6:2) speaks of "baptisms" but *Ephesians* (4:5) says there is "One baptism." It is said that the Catholic doctrine "the sacrament of Baptism" can destroy original sin. But Mary the mother of Jesus was not baptised. What is the need of baptism then?

643. Do you think it proper to give Christian funeral to a fetus or a child who is just two months and without Baptism?

Jesus -- the Only Way

644. The most popular and oft-quoted verse from John says: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (3:1) One can read the line by twisting a little without changing the meaning of "God so loved the world...." that He created Hell and "That He sent His only

begotten son..." to death. If God really so loved the world why did not He forgive Adam for his inquisitive taste for knowledge? God seems to be much worried about his apple and nothing else.

645. "If God sent his only son Jesus to redeem mankind and if without the recommendation of Jesus none is eligible for salvation what will he do to all the millions who have never heard of his religion and haven't been able to apprehend it?

646. Millions of men and women became sinner and went to hell because God sent his only son after thousands of years. Did not God deny justice to mankind by delaying the process of sending his son in the principle of "justice delayed is justice denied"?

647. If Christ came to this world to help the sinner, the poor and the wretched, can he be happy in heaven sitting on the throne at the right hand of his Father, the four beasts near him, with one lakh and forty-four thousand saints dressed in white robes, bowing continually before his throne, and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb?

648. If faith in Jesus as Son of God is the only key to heaven (Jn 3:16; Mt 10:14-15; Rom 3:27; 9:30) one need not do good work and serve God (Mt 6:24). Why did Jesus say one must do good work in order to be saved (Lk 10:25-37)? Why did he say "good work alone will bring rewards (Mk 9:41)? Paul cannot be mistaken when he repeats the words of Jesus that work will get one immortality? (Rom 2:6)

649. How many times does a man have the right to repent in his life time? Does one's repentance before death fetch him or her salvation? On the eve of death Jesus said: "It is finished," and he completed our salvation and we believe in his finished work. If we still need salvation, what for Jesus died and for whom? That speaks Satan still has the better position without having delivered his own son to death.

Judas the Redeemer

650. If the death of Christ was the sincerest wish of God for the greater benefit of mankind, the betrayal of Judas before crucifixion was in God's scheme. Had there been no Judas there would have been no crucifixion. Without crucifixion none can dream of resurrection. Without resurrection we cannot think of our salvation. Even for the divine scheme of God the Jewish priest, who urged the death of Christ and Roman soldiers, who performed the closing part of the melodrama, were highly essential.

Christ Died for Jews

651. Is it not a fact that the Jewish God *Yahweh* introduced Himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? (Ex 3:15)

652. Does God not express His concern for the Jews and wished to rescue His flock, who by then lacked a shepherd and as such became food for all the wild animals?

653. Is Christianity a new religion or a movement of the Messianic Judaism? If it is a new religious order how did Jesus say that he was deputed by his father to take care of the lost sheep of Israel? The context is about a Canaanite woman who pleaded Jesus to exercise her daughter, who was probably in great pain, Jesus at first hesitated to help and answered, "I was sent to help the Jews – the lost sheep of Israel – not the gentiles (Mt 15:24). Even after the woman fell to her feet and begged him to help her daughter, Jesus said: "It doesn't seem right to take bread from the children and throw it to the dogs. Did he not insult the gentiles by addressing them as dogs and at times goats? (Mt 25:34-41)

654. Did not Jesus become ethnocentric when he commanded his twelve disciples: Do not go among the *Gentiles* or enter any town of the Samaritans, Go rather to the lost sheep of the Israel (Mt 10:5-6)? Even he openly

expressed his superiority as a Jew and with authority said: "We Jews know all about God for salvation comes to the world through the Jews. (Jn 4:22)

655. Did not Jesus warn the gentiles that he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats and put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left and invite the sheep to the kingdom of the heaven and curse these goats to eternal fire ? (Mt 25:34-41)

656. Can we deny the fact that Jesus made it clear that sheep cannot be goat as non-Jews cannot be Jews and made the Jews aware that they should be careful about the non-Jews who will come to them in sheep's clothing but are ferocious wolves ? (Mt 7:15-16)

657. Did Jesus not make it clear to his Jewish followers that these gentiles are not Jews by giving the example : do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistled ? (Mt 7:15-16)

658. Did not Jesus tell the gentiles who performed many miracles in his name : I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers (Mt 7:22-23) and clearly told them : For many are invited, but few are chosen (Mt 22:1-14)? These chosen people are none but the Jews.

659. Is it not a fact that Jesus was so much worried about the Jews that while returning from the grave he asked Peter to feed his lambs ? (Jn 21:15)

660. Can you deny the fact that salvation has come to the gentiles to make Israel envious ? (Rom 11:11)

661. Is Paul free from his Jewish tradition when he claimed to be an apostle for the Gentiles (Rom 11:1)? Is his example of the Gentiles being grafted in the olive tree not making the Gentiles the second class citizens for salvation (Rom 11:17-18)? Is it not foolishness for the non-Jewish

Christians to go to Jewish heaven where the Gentiles have no right to enter ?

662. Is it not a fact that the New Paradise of the Christians is reserved for 144,000 Jewish Christians who are from 12 tribes from Judah to Benjamin ? No gentiles is allowed to the Christian heaven. I donot understand why the missionaries give false promise to the non-Jewish Christians for the Christian heaven ?

To Serve God Better

663. A true Christian should not laugh or be gay (Eph 5:4), should not listen to music and take part in dancing because they are evil (I Cor 10:7), should weep (Jas 4:9), for that he should whip himself, (I Cor 9:27), should not plant tomatoes and cucumbers in his backyards (Lv 19:19), should not eat clams, oysters, lobsters, shrimps (Lv 11:12), spare ribs, bacon and roast pork (Lv 11:7), should marry to many wives (Dt 25:15-17), endanger the lives of newborn babies by circumcising all of them at birth (Gn 17:14), should not wear clothes made of cotton and polyester (Lv 19:19) and should not keep any kind of photographs, statues or any kind of graven images (Ex 20:4) should not even heat their homes, cook food on the sabbath day (Ex 35:3) and should hate his parents, wife and family. (Lk 14:26,33; 5:11; Mt 19:29; 8:21-22)

Obey, Obey, Obey

664. Christ obeys God. Man obeys Christ, wife obeys the husband, the child obeys the parants, the servent obeys the master, the citizen obeys the govenment. To resist any government is to resist God. Disobedience is sinful and slavery is divine. Slaves should love their master even if they beat them (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:18; 3:6; 2:13; Heb 13:17; Eph 6:5; 1Tim 6:1; Tit 2:9; Col 3:22; Ex 21: 1;24:1). Cross breeding of cattle and synthetic cloth are specifically forbidden (Lev

19:19). Predicting, shaving, haircuts, and tattoos are forbidden (Lev 19:26). No one with mutilated sex organs including family planning or of illegitimate birth may be allowed to worship, nor may any of his children, down to the tenth generation (Dt 23:1). If a father has a rebellious son, the father must stone him to death. (Dt 21:18)

Truth Shall Make You Free

665. If belief is a private affair why do people organise it and impose it on others who think differently? Can we excuse the Catholic Church for establishing Inquisition in many parts of the world including Spain and Goa? Can we accept such religious rituals which tortured and burned people alive as heretics or as heathen?

666. Does Salvation depend on our joining a Church or believing Jesus the Christ or being baptized in the name of Holy Trinity? Jesus makes salvation and eternal life easier and promised his kingdom of heaven as recorded by Matthew to the poor in spirit and in heart the merciful, the peace makers, to those who keep and teach the commandments, to those who become as little children, to those who sell all that they have and give to the poor and to those who feed the hungry.

But I'm unhappy to say that if the Bible is the only book for salvation why was it not revealed to all nations of the world at the same time? It would have been better if God had given a printed copy of the Bible to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. But it is unfortunate to know that the Jews themselves managed without a Bible until the days of Ezra-the scribe.



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About DR UMESH PATRI

Umesh Patri earned his MA degree in British and American Literature from Gurukul University, Hardwar and in 1982 he was awarded PhD from Utkal University, Orissa.

Patri has a long and distinguished teaching career at DAV College, F.M. College, Rajendra College and Ravenshaw College affiliated to Berhampur University, Utkal University, Sambalpur University and at present teaches in BJB an Autonomous College at Bhubaneswar.

He is a lifetime member of American Studies Research Centre, Indian Association for Canadian Studies, Indian Society for Commonwealth Studies, Institute of Oriya Studies and the International P.E.N.

As a part of his post-doctoral project he has visited 57 libraries abroad that include Harvard University Library, Cambridge; British Library, London; and the Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Besides he had an extensive lecture tour in USA, Canada, England and Germany in 1994. Patri is listed in the most selective directory of International Organizations for Good Temperance (IOGT) England and his name has been referred to as a writer in the Norwegian and British Humanist Journals and The Thoreau Society Bulletin, N.Y.

Because of exemplary performance his name has been recommended recently to the American Biographical Institute's Governing Board of Editors for biographical inclusion in the *Millennium Edition* of the International Directory of Distinguished leadership.

His books in English and in Oriya include : *Hindu Scriptures and American Transcendentalists*, prefaced by Walter Harding, Distinguished Professor of American Literature Emeritus, State University of New York; in Oriya *Vedas and the Bible* in 2 volumes; *A Quest for Another World*; *East Looks at the West*; *Thesis and Anti-thesis*; *Krishna in Christ* and he has edited *The Complete Works of Mangala Charan*. His article : "A Fresh Interpretation of Emerson's 'Brahma' in the light of Bhagawat Gita", has been included in the compilation of *Indian Contribution to American Studies* Somya Publications, Bombay and Delhi. and won the Olive J. Reddick Award by the American Studies Research Centre for the best paper presented at the IAAS annual conference for the year 1994-95. #

Nobel Laureates say...

It is time to tell our Fundamentalists bluntly that they are the worst enemies of religion today : that Jehovah is no God, but a barbarous tribal idol; that the English Bible is yet a fumble of superstition, obsolete cosmology and a theology presented in such an unbalanced one-sided way that the first Christian Catholic Church forbade the laity to read the Bible without special permission.

— George Bernard Shaw

(Everybody's Political "What's What")

Its (the Bible) notion of starry universe is childish, its history is epical and legendary: in short, people whose education in these departments is derived from the Bible are absurdly misinformed as to be unfit for public employment, parental responsibility or the franchise.

— George Bernard Shaw

*(Preface to Adventures of the
Black Girl in Her Search for God.)*

Of all the creeds of Europe and Asia, that of Brahmanistic India seems to me the one which embraces the most of the universe. I do not speak against the others. I see in them moments of exceptional sublimity, giddy heights, spiritual fire. What makes me love Brahman concept above all is that it seems to me to contain them all. Better than the faith of Europe, it could harmonise itself with the vast hypothesis of modern science.

— Romain Rolland



PROBLEMS IN PARADISE